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Easton PA Teachers Open Gate To More Rewarding—and Risky—Future

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FORWARD & ADDRESS CORRECTION

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PRESIDENT'S VIEWPOINT

Let's Go for It!

The year the National Education Association was born—1857—membership reached a grand total of 43.

The year I was born, NEA membership inched past 200,000.

The year I started teaching, NEA membership hit 800,000.

A little more than four years later, membership shot past the one million mark. The year was 1966.

Dwell on that development. Our Association was growing—steadily and, by almost any standards, impressively. But it took us more than a century to reach the one-million-member milestone.

By contrast, in the last year alone, we've added more than 50,000 new members. In fact, the number of members we *added* exceeded the total number who belonged to our Association in 1920. The result: on June 4, 1988, NEA membership topped 1.9 million.

As I reflect on this history, I'm struck by one tantalizing fact: if we were to add 87,000 members this school year, we would have accomplished, in *23* years, a feat that took *109* years the first time around. We'd welcome our *two* millionth member in June of 1989.

As recently as two years ago, I would have said this goal was no more than a fantasy. In fact, I came close to doing exactly that. At the 1987 Representative Assembly in Los Angeles, I challenged your elected delegates to take aim at the goal of two-million-and-one by 1991.

At the time, I thought I'd issued a tough challenge. Very tough. And I had. But you have met that challenge. Today, we are far ahead of

Joe Di Dio

NEA President
Mary Hatwood Futrell

the pace I proposed. And I believe we can quicken that pace. I believe we can make the goal of 1991 the goal of 1989. And my message is a very simple one: Let's go for it!

I know, of course, that some will say we seek this organizational growth to enhance our political clout. Well, they're right. For we know that each time we add a new member, we add a new advocate for America's children. Each time we add a new member, we add a new voice to speak on behalf of those who cannot vote. Each time we add a new member; we add a new ally in our struggle for professional dignity and professional compensation.

We need apologize for none of this. So let us move forward.

Throughout this school year, let us remember the proverb that a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step. In every local affiliate where we lack 100 percent membership, let's pledge to reach 100 percent. In every school building where even one staff member remains outside the Association, let's add that staffer to our ranks. In every district where a colleague retires, let's introduce that colleague to the privileges of membership in NEA-Retired.

Above all, let's open our ranks and affirm our kinship with all who contribute to the life of our schools and the welfare of our students. Let's remember that the challenges that confront us today and await us tomorrow demand a culture of cooperation among teachers, teacher assistants, nurses, counselors, librarians, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, clerical staff, maintenance workers, custodians, and higher education faculty. Let us *act* like family—and *enlarge* our family.

I want to leave you with one final statistic: if we add an *average* of 10 members to each of our local affiliates, I will have the joy of announcing next June—in the last column I write as your NEA president—that you outdid yourselves. That as my tenure as President was ending, *you* gave NEA a new beginning. A new foundation. A foundation of 2 million strong. A firm foundation for the future.

Let's get started. Today. For tomorrow.

TRENDS

Coach the Coaches

Lots of youngsters are "turned off" to sports because their coaches aren't trained properly, say researchers Martha Ewing and Vern Seefeldt of Michigan State University's Youth Sports Institute. Surveying 8,000 students aged 10 to 18, they found that younger students, in particular, need sensitive and skilled coaches.

"An incompetent coach can be much more destructive to the sports experiences of younger children than of older ones," note the researchers.

Ewing and Seefeldt recommend that coaches encourage youngsters—especially 10- to 14-year-olds—to explore a full range of activities.

Keeping Pace With Inflation

The average U.S. worker's pay increased by 3.7 percent—just a little less than the 4 percent rate of inflation between June 1987 and June 1988, says the Labor Department.

Wages and salaries rose fastest (up 4.6 percent) in the Northeast, where unemployment is also the lowest. Next came the South (up 3.8 percent), the West (up 3.7 percent), and the Midwest (up 2.8 percent).

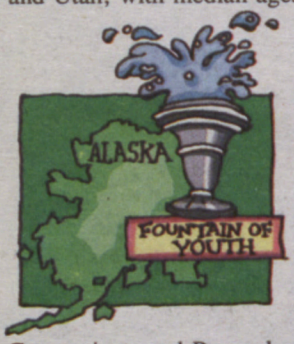
Bringing in the largest pay hikes were workers in the country's manufacturing and construction industries.

In contrast to the rather modest wage and salary gains, the value of benefits for all workers rose dramatically—6.4 percent, nearly twice the increase from June 1986 to June 1987. Rising health care costs fueled the benefit hike.

Go West, Young American!

From the U.S. Census Bureau comes a new report indicating the U.S. median age is now 32.1 years, up 2.1 years in this decade.

The most "youthful" states are Alaska and Utah, with median ages in 1987 of



25.5 and 28.3 years respectively. The states with the highest median ages are Florida, at 36.3 years, followed by New Jersey, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania, all at 34 years.

Since 1980, the fastest-growing age group has been 25- to 44-year-olds, up 23.8 percent.

Teaching's Tough

Working Women has come up with its list of the best and worst jobs for women—and guess what? Teaching showed up on the list of the 10 worst jobs. The other nine were telemarketer, word processor, flight attendant, classical dancer, social worker, nurse, contractor, lawyer, and investment banker.

The July 1988 issue noted that stress, hours, and sacrifices played a large part in deciding which list each job belonged on.

The 10 best jobs? Corporate estate manager, service quality manager, hazardous waste expert, chief information officer, industrial designer, physician/administrator, corporate-identity consultant, patent lawyer, export manager, and physical therapist.

Glued to the Tube

Recent studies indicate American students watch an average of 23 hours of TV a week. By the time they're 70, they'll have spent a full seven years watching the tube! Each year children watch 14,000 sexual references (not counting commercials)—and only 150 of these refer to birth control. Students also watch more than 2,000 beer and wine commercials each year.

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ELECTIONS '88

EDUCATION A KEY ISSUE AS CAMPAIGN HEATS UP

NEA members are out to elect a President who can help deliver what voters say they want: excellent schools.

No single issue, says a new NEA/Gallup Poll, looms larger in the public mind this year than education. And 400 NEA members in Atlanta at the Democratic Convention helped to translate that interest into the strongest education plank ever in a party platform.

Meanwhile, on the Republican side of the fence, NEA members active in the GOP worked this summer to convince Vice President George Bush to complete the questionnaire and interview necessary for candidates who seek NEA's endorsement.

The decision on which candidate will receive NEA's endorsement for the election November 8 will be made by the more than 8,400 Association members who were delegates to the 1988 NEA Representative Assembly. Each delegate was mailed a ballot after the GOP convention. The results of the delegate vote will be announced September 8.

In mid-July, in Atlanta, NEA members elected as delegates to the Democratic Convention helped produce a strong platform statement on public schools: "We now spend only two cents of every federal dollar for education. We pledge to better balance our national priorities by significantly increasing federal funds for education."

Last month, 35 NEA members ventured to New Orleans to put the imprint of education on the GOP platform and to do a bit of convincing, too.

"George Bush cannot go on claiming he wants to be known as the 'education president' until he faces up to the nation's largest education union," notes Utah Education Association President Jim Campbell, chair of NEA's Republican Caucus and a GOP convention delegate.

Joe Di Dio

NEA President Mary Hatwood Futrell and some of the 400 NEA delegates to the Democratic National Convention in Atlanta.

Mike Edwards

Joe Di Dio

Utah Education Association President Jim Campbell, a GOP convention delegate, testified at the Republican Party's platform committee hearings.

New NEA Ads Timed to Political Season

Every education decision's a political one. And NEA's 1988 national television advertising campaign will seek to help voters understand that reality.

By focusing on classroom issues—shortage of qualified teachers, too large class sizes, too small teacher salaries, and cuts in school programs—the new NEA TV ads drive home the message that better funding is an essential key to improving education. Each ad ends with the question: "In this election year, what's more important than investing in our kids?"

"If the public begins to view education as an investment critical to America's future," notes NEA President Mary Hatwood Futrell, "then the money could be forthcoming that our schools and colleges so urgently need."

The NEA ads premiered on CNN, the Cable News Network, during broadcast of the Democratic and Republican Conventions. (For more about the NEA members who star in the commercials, see page 17 of this issue.)

News Beat

● New research proves the obvious: smaller classes are better for kids. Two new studies—one from Texas, the other from Indiana—show cutting **class size** improved attendance, self-image, social skills, and test scores for K-3 students. In Texas, test scores were up 15 percent three years after a law passed limiting class size to 22.

● When young adults tell you they need some time to find themselves, they may mean they need a **geography** lesson. In a recent Gallup study, U.S. adults aged 18-24 did worse on a basic geography quiz than their counterparts in eight other countries, and worse than all other U.S. age groups. The poll showed that 75 percent of all U.S. adults can't find the Persian Gulf on a map; 45 percent can't find Central America. To correct the problem, the National Geographic Society will give away atlases, sponsor a National Geography Bee, and fund teacher training.

● Having a baby may be even more painful—economically speaking—than non-parents realize. According to a study released by the American Association of University Women, the average earnings of **working women** drop about about $3,000 in a year they give birth and up to $6,000 for each of the next two years. Lost wages when mom takes time off for delivery and child care account for only part of the drop. Because many employers won't provide maternity leave and guaranteed reemployment rights, moms return to the work force in jobs that typically pay $1.40 an hour less than they were earning prior to childbirth.

● The baby boomlet of recent years has caused a slight increase in the number of public school **teachers** this fall. The Department of Education's Center for Education Statistics predicted that 37,000 more teachers—32,000 elementary, 5,000 secondary—would be hired this year than in 1987.

WELL PUT!

"Far more than an issue of language policy, the English-only issue is an issue of civil rights, of respect for languages and cultures, which though different and diverse, are nonetheless American."

—Martha Inez Jimenez, policy analyst, Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund

COVER STORY

EASTON, PA INTO

With a landmark new contract, teachers in Easton, Pa. are stepping beyond old hierarchies—and challenging the way schools have been traditionally run.

This fall the teachers of Easton, Pa., are taking a giant step along the road to true professionalism—and better education. The Easton teachers are following a path they first chose in 1985 with an innovative five-year contract, now extended to 1993. By that time, if all plans work out, Easton teachers will play a major role in determining just how schools function and students learn.

The Easton path features several key elements. In each school building, the principal and two teachers elected by teachers now form a planning council. More than 50 of the Easton Area Education Association's 375 members ran in the elections for the council spots. In addition, the presidents of EAEA and the district's principals' group sit on the school board as nonvoting members. Both are also full participants in the superintendent's cabinet.

Districtwide, a senate made up of the principal and one teacher from each school planning council will contribute to decisions about school district policies. Another new panel—a joint personnel committee that will include the director of personnel,

President Larry Conahan and President-Elect Jo Anne Bailey, who takes office next spring, are leading the Easton Area Education Association venture into a world of tough decisions, dramatic challenges, and exciting educational breakthroughs.

COVER STORY

TEACHERS TAKE BOLD STEP TO THE FUTURE

an EAEA board member, and other, ad hoc members—will hear and settle teacher complaints about their transfers, assignments, and teaching schedules.

All school staff involved in these committees and councils will be given release time for their activities. Two years from now, other bodies are to be set up, notably a staff development panel of master teachers with summer work and released time during the year. These teachers can also serve on a group of exemplary teachers, chosen by consensus to help colleagues whose skills have been assessed as substandard. (By that time, a more realistic assessment program for principals and teachers is to be jointly developed.)

Also by 1990, committees including parents and community representatives are to be working with at-risk students.

Substantial raises for teachers are due that year as well. By 1993, Easton teachers with a bachelors degree will earn between $25,675 and $47,343.

"Finally the person who's in the classroom every day will have a voice in what's going on," says fifth-grade teacher Jo Anne Bailey, EAEA president-elect. "And when you have control, you feel better about your situation—and teacher morale itself affects learning."

One distinguishing feature of the Easton plan is accountability. The plan must begin producing "demonstrably improved educational outcomes"—the point of the whole effort—by September 1, 1993. If not, teachers will lose their joint personnel committee and principals will lose hefty raises.

"Our new agreement is possible only because there's trust among all the parties," says President Larry Conahan of the Easton Area Education Association.

That trust didn't always exist. Education in Easton has been marked by upheavals. The district has had 16 superintendents in the last 31 years. Bitter strikes tore the system in 1976 and again in 1980.

The Lehigh Valley town is only now recovering from a heavy economic blow—the closure of steel mills in neighboring Bethlehem. What once was farmland is now dotted with light and and high-tech industries. And quite a few local residents now commute to jobs as far away as New York City.

Despite the upheavals, everyone agrees Easton education is good (about 80 percent of high school graduates go on to college, for example). But, everyone agrees, it could be still better: that's the point of the new pact.

Easton bears out recent studies: strong contracts ease, and guide, educational change. The current plan rests on a proviso in the 1985 contract—teachers were to make more of the decisions affecting their work. A new alignment of forces in the district, in turn, made that proviso possible. The school board had chosen William Moloney as superintendent in 1984 hoping he'd end the dissension that had sapped morale. Moloney did more—he reached out to all parties that wanted to give Easton's students the best education.

Among the first allies to appear was Easton Area UniServ director Angelo Iacone. Iacone tested Moloney's ideas and his sincerity and began to work with him, very carefully.

"The superintendent was saying, 'You folks are the professionals, we're going to trust you to do your jobs," recalls Jo Anne Bailey, then president of EAEA. "We weren't accustomed to that kind of administration."

The Easton plan leaves plenty of questions to be answered. How will "demonstrably improved educational outcomes" be measured? Can teachers really reach a consensus on who is a master teacher, or will the master teacher selection process undermine teacher unity? What topics will the school planning councils and the districtwide senate address? Will the decisions made by these bodies overlap with decisions that belong in the Association contract?

Will the new mechanisms make enough of a difference? Five years from now, in September 1993, will the plan have been stamped a success? Most important, when the trial period is over, what will the Easton schools look like? Will they provide a pattern of excellence that other districts can adapt for their own needs?

Easton teachers, together with their administrators and their employers, are taking a big step into the unknown. Whatever the risks of their enterprise, they believe that the possible benefits—in better education for Easton's children and in their own dignity—are worth the dangers of the adventure.

"Now we're going to have to go out there and invent that better education," says EAEA President Conahan. "It's going to take time; we're willing to do it. We realize the plan calls for greater accountability, but we're willing to accept that challenge, too."

—Jane Power

A Nationwide Movement

NEA members across the country have taken part in developing programs that, like the Easton plan, will give them more responsibility.

► The Montgomery County, Md., system outside Washington, D.C.—with 96,000 students, one of the nation's largest—is piloting a cooperatively developed flexibility plan that allows teachers, parents, and administrators in each school to set staffing, scheduling, curriculum, and other policies.

Linda Hayashi

► In the 6,500-student Oak Ridge, Tenn., school system, an NEA program helped organize discussions at the Willowbrook Elementary School that led to new schedule flexibility. Teachers now have more time to meet with individual students or parents. One result: such parent-sponsored projects as overnight read-ins.

► For several years, the Spokane, Wash., schools have had councils of teachers, classified personnel, and administrators who determine schools' priorities, including how money is to be spent. Spokane teacher Linda Hayashi notes that this type of reform changes the role of the Association.

► In the Phoenix (Ariz.) Union High School District, the Association negotiated an agreement at South Mountain High School calling for the English and math teachers to teach three classes a day and other teachers to teach four. The teachers spend their free hours tutoring at-risk students, talking with parents, and developing innovations. The project, which expands South Mountain's faculty from 130 to 180, is being set up with support from a court-ordered desegregation plan.

► In the Seattle suburb of Bellevue, Wash., teachers negotiated establishment of staff-chosen councils to make school decisions about instructional programs, school and classroom organization, curriculum content, use of resources, and staffing. The 15,000-student system has all but eliminated grievances arising from what was once their greatest source: involuntary transfers.

Jimmy Nations

► A word of caution comes from first grade teacher Jimmy Nations of Dalton, Ga. Involved in an NEA-backed Mastery in Learning project, Nations notes, "True school reform doesn't come easily. We must recognize that some of what we've been doing hasn't worked—but we shouldn't just adopt an idea because it's new."

—J.P.

Local Look

RHODE ISLAND

NEA Portsmouth, led by Association president Diane DiLorenzo, has cleared the way for more women and minorities to be hired to fill administrative positions in the Portsmouth school system. But it took four years of legal battles to do it.

A new affirmative action policy goes into effect this month following the local's battle to end the district's 16-year tradition of hiring only male administrators.

The new policy requires women and minorities to serve on the previously all-male screening committees that determine candidate eligibility for administrative positions. The district will also be required to work with minority recruitment agencies to seek out women and minority candidates in hiring.

MICHIGAN

After an overwhelming election victory last spring, Flint substitute teachers became the first group of substitutes in Michigan to elect a union.

The substitutes voted 51-1 to become part of the United Teachers of Flint, an MEA affiliate.

"This is one small step for the educational community, but it's one giant step for substitute teachers in their pursuit of professional growth and development," says Liz Sanders, a substitute teacher and leader of the organizing effort.

Sanders says the substitutes will head into bargaining looking for higher wages and better benefits, improved opportunities for full-time employment, rights to available substitute work, and a formal grievance procedure.

MISSISSIPPI

When members of the Jones County (Mississippi) Association of Educators supported a candidate for district superintendent of schools, they were taking a a big chance—and they nearly paid a high price for it.

JCAE's candidate lost—and the winner sought revenge. He picked one JCAE member, principal John Simpson, as his target.

The new superintendent cited a state law—the School Employees Procedures Act of 1977 (SEPA)—that would allow him to get rid of Simpson. Under SEPA, a district that has no dismissal policy can fire an employee for good reason, bad reason. . . or no reason at all.

But the superintendent's plan backfired. JCAE members met with the school board, parents, and community leaders, pointing out that the superintendent was using SEPA for political reasons. After heated discussions, the school board approved a district policy requiring that dismissals be based solely on an employee's job performance. The new policy makes it clear that quality education and fair treatment go hand-in-hand.

WALL-TO-WALL UNIT TAKES SHAPE IN TUCSON

Edward McCain

A potential wall-to-wall membership of more than 5,000 has these Tucson Education Association leaders feeling good about their Association's future. From left are Kay Lybeck, Arizona Education Association vice-president and former chair of TEA's ESP steering committee; Diana Seal, ESP steering committee member; and Paul Felix, current chair, ESP steering committee.

ESP, Teachers Join Forces

In just five months, between December 1987 and May 1988, the Tucson Education Association—

► went wall-to-wall.

► decertified another organization as bargaining agent for the Tucson school district's food service and white-collar employees.

► won the right to represent the food service and white-collar workers in collective bargaining.

"But there was a hitch," says school secretary Diana Seal, a member of TEA's ESP steering committee.

"Before the May representation election, the district unilaterally removed 600 of us—mostly building secretaries, teacher aides, and office managers—from the white-collar bargaining unit," Seal explains.

"The district claimed that TEA would have a conflict of interest representing teachers as well as employees who were evaluated by teachers or who might type teacher evaluations.

"Of course," Seal continues, "that was ridiculous. If TEA could represent the rest of the white-collar unit—for instance, library clerks, most central office secretaries, and data processing workers—there was no reason it couldn't represent the rest of us."

Because the disagreement had not been resolved by the time of the May representation election, the 600 displaced white-collar workers couldn't vote. But TEA included the issue of their representation in its ongoing teacher contract negotiations.

"We told the district we wouldn't recommend ratification of the teacher contract," says TEA president Ken Freed, "unless the district agreed to hold a representation election for the 600 ESP staffers."

In June the Tucson school board agreed, the teacher contract was signed, and the 600 ESP staffers went back to the white-collar bargaining unit. On July 22, they voted overwhelmingly in favor of representation by TEA. And TEA now represents all white-collar classified employees in the Tucson schools.

"In Tucson we have a potential wall-to-wall membership of more than 5,000," Freed notes, "and if we can win the allegiance of some additional blue-collar workers, we'll have won the right to represent them all."

"I'm very pleased with the support I got," Simpson says. "JCAE came to my aid, and they got results."

CALIFORNIA

Following 15 months of bitter negotiations—including several first-ever strike days—the 1,300-member Orange Unified Education Association finally came to terms with the school district.

The contract gives teachers in the city of Orange a 3 percent pay increase retroactive to July 1, 1987, a transitional salary schedule providing a 6.3 percent increase for 1988-89, and—if district reserves are at least $629,000—an additional .61 percent raise on Feb. 1, 1989. The district will also pay the full cost of fringe benefits up to 8.5 percent over 1987-88 costs. An employer-employee trust will cover any further increases.

OUEA crisis chair Ruby Penner says community support played a major role in helping the affiliate achieve a favorable settlement. Parents organized community meetings where they asked board members pointed questions, distributed informational leaflets, held rallies, and walked the picket lines with teachers.

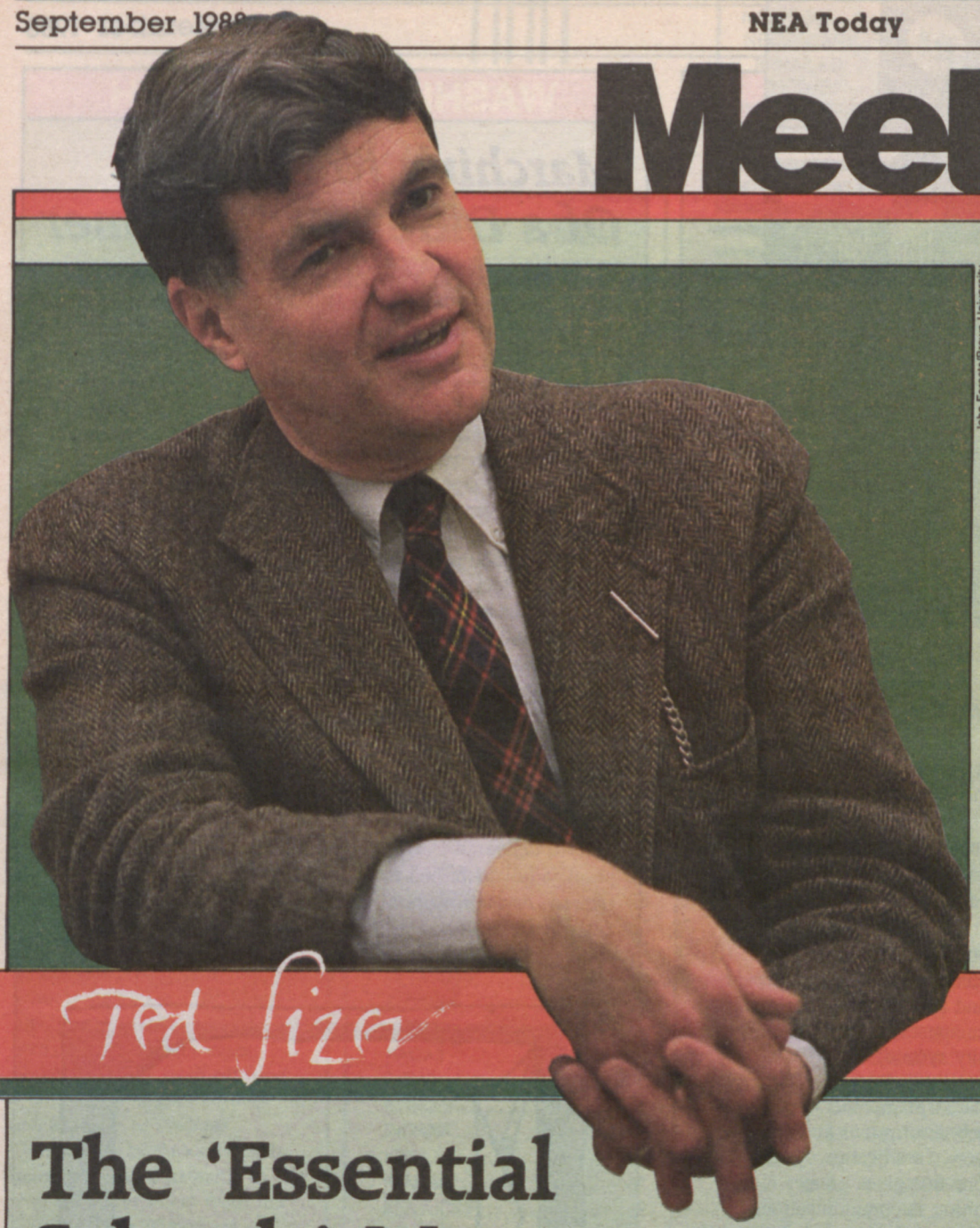
"Suddenly the district was able to reach deeper into its pockets and find money to do what they could have done all along," says Penner.

INDIANA

When Michigan City school officials proposed contracting out management of custodians and maintenance employees to the private firm Service Masters, the NEA-affiliated Michigan City Classified Employees rose in opposition. They studied the firm—its high cost, inefficiency, and tax exemptions. Then they organized a community support group. Marietta Walden, a custodian at Elston High School, explains, "We asked our fellow taxpayers: Why should you pay more for what you already get?"

Coworkers pitched in. "Bringing in Service Masters is a union-busting tactic," points out bus driver and Association member Norma Antisdel. "After custodians and maintenance would come cafeteria workers and bus drivers." But in July came victory: the school board chose to hire a local manager.

Meet:



John Foraste/Brown University

The 'Essential Schools' Man

Theodore Sizer's 1984 book Horace's Compromise: The Dilemma of the American High School *introduced readers to "Horace," the veteran English teacher who knows his stuff, but—and this is his compromise—doesn't insist that his students know theirs.*

The low standard is due to lack of time. With 150 students, Horace can't give each one the personal attention that would enable him or her to master the subject. How to give Horace more time? Pare away nonessentials, says Sizer. Concentrate on developing students' competence in reading, writing, and fundamental mathematics.

Reduce the teacher-student load from 1:150 to 1:80 by trading other positions for more teacher slots. Put the teachers on teams and have them coach, not teach. Have kids work on their own—inquiry-style—demonstrating mastery by a " performance" or "exhibition."

In 1984, Sizer organized a league of schools willing to slim down. Called the Coalition of Essential Schools, the 56-school league is headquartered at Brown University, Providence, R.I., where Sizer is professor of education.* NEA Today *staff writer Nancy Needham recently visited him there to assess the Coalition's progress.*

How are Coalition schools organized?
The pattern varies. Some schools do not have explicit experimental structures you could clearly label the "essential school" program. Others, such as Paschal High School, in Fort Worth, Tex., have a well-defined school-within-a-school for students who volunteer. In still others, like Thayer High School, in Winchester, N.H., the Coalition program is schoolwide and includes all students.

Which works best?
A school-within-a-school risks the old system overwhelming the new; everything in high school affects everything else. If you change the students from passive receivers of information into workers who ask their own questions—as Coalition schools try to do—this affects the curriculum and the deployment of teachers. So to take change seriously, you have to take it ambitiously—not piecemeal.

Also, it's easier to start with ninth or tenth graders because the political pressures of school-leaving—college acceptances, SAT scores—are less onerous then. Younger kids are also used to better—that is, inquiry-oriented—teaching if they've just come from resourceful middle and elementary schools.

What is coaching like?
The teacher-coaches have a wonderful ability to listen, to see why a kid is off track. They ask pressing—but not pressuring—questions.

A marvelous physics class I watched recently ended up with experiments on the floor. The teacher was asking biting questions about the center of gravity of a horizontally held wire coat hanger. The kids were testing their answers.

Have any students showed their mastery by exhibition?
No youngster has yet taken a full-scale culminating exhibition. There are bits and pieces starting, however. One school has a very simple, old-fashioned, schoolwide essay-writing requirement that kids must complete between 11th grade and graduation.

Are there noticeable changes in Coalition schools?
To single out one small but important change: Coalition schools are noisier. Where there's a school-within-a-school, I can sometimes "hear" in a building where the Coalition program is. Others have said the kids in Coalition programs tend to be more questing—cheekier.

What kinds of schools are most successful?
Interestingly, the schools where engagement with Coalition ideas is most intense are those serving the least privileged students. It's easier to see that doing something new there has to be better than the status quo.

How do you measure progress?
We want to go beyond the usual measures, such as achievement tests or college admission rates. We're training teachers and students as ethnographers to track what's happening. They collect documents, such as student newspapers and essays, and record what's going on. In many areas—clique patterns, for example—kids are the only ones to be aware of change.

What changes within school faculties are crucial?
Typically a core of innovators begin, often finding it hard to bring others along. One veteran teacher told us that every faculty has its eagles and its turkeys. He wouldn't join in schoolwide team teaching, he said, "because I don't want to risk teaching with a turkey."

How do teacher unions get involved?
Unions have to be part of the original commitment. But the critical moment for teacher associations comes when the project is beyond the stage of early enthusiasm—at the point where it's proposed that, say, a U.S. history teacher take on American literature or that an empty slot in guidance be filled with an additional English teacher.

Have political standoffs on such questions occurred?
Yes. But outside pressure for schools to reform continues, so I remain optimistic that folks will keep trying to agree. If everyone stops worrying about adolescents, however, there will probably be no reform, as there are few incentives within schools for anyone to change very much.

How far has the Coalition come in relation to its goals?
We all have a responsibility to say what things are working or not working. Some schools are pressing ahead; many are stalled; one or two are paralyzed.

The loss of key administrators—the ones who made an original commitment—is one way reform can stall.

Another way is through collegial mistrust. The real division in a school is between the people who, say, work to rule or won't stay past 3 p.m. and those who are willing to venture—in this case, with the Coalition—and take ownership of and responsibility for their work.

Will the Coalition take on more than the 56 schools?
Not in the present way. More schools will be involved via the Re-Learning project, which involves us, the Education Commission of the States, and several state governments.

The states will handle the new schools and will also review their own state- and district-level policymaking and regulatory arangements to make them supportive of school-level initiatives.

Meanwhile, I spend endless time raising money—for example, for teachers to work up prototype student exhibitions or to make videotapes of teachers coaching and students working. Right now we have only one edited tape, called "The Student as Worker, the Teacher as Coach."

For information on the videotape, a prospectus on the Coalition, or a sample copy of its newsletter *Horace,* write to the Coalition of Essential Schools, Box 1938, Providence, RI 02912.

*The Coalition is a joint project of the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the National Association of Independent Schools, which also sponsored A Study of High Schools, the research project from which *Horace's Compromise* emerged.

PAY EQUITY WIN

Sweet Victory For Maine ESP

David Learning

A $3,700 salary increase—that's what the pay equity victory will mean for executive secretary and ACSUM President Margo Lister.

After a five-year struggle to remove sex and race bias from the University's job classification system, the nearly 1,000 members of the Associated Clerical, Office, Laboratory, and Technical Staff of the University of Maine (ACSUM) finally hit pay dirt.

Last spring, Maine Governor John McKernan signed a bill authorizing expenditure of $2.7 million to correct biases in the wage-setting process. The hefty appropriation will fund salary increases ranging from 10 to 21 percent for nearly all ACSUM members.

The vital evidence of inequity came from an Association pay equity study.

The study's results showed that jobs primarily performed by women and minorities—support jobs—were systematically undervalued and underpaid.

For Linda Reed, a secretary on the University's Bangor campus, pay equity means a $3,000 raise. Instead of being paid for answering the phone and typing, Reed is now recognized for *all* the things she regularly does on the job, including dealing with University staff and the public, handling sensitive information, and coping with stress.

For Blane Shaw, a records technician on the Orono campus, pay equity means a $2,500 increase. Shaw is now paid for the responsibility he takes for cost control, and for his knowledge of computer systems and word processing.

The pay equity victory comes after years of study, analysis, organizing, bargaining, and lobbying.

In 1980, ACSUM negotiated a joint university-Association study of the outdated classification system. A committee of ACSUM members evaluated the old system, surveyed members about their jobs and job descriptions, and compiled the data.

The results showed what employees already knew: clerical jobs were underpaid and underrated on the eight campuses of the state University system.

With help from NEA, ACSUM members updated job descriptions and created a new classification system—one that gives greater recognition to communications skills, interpersonal skills, and mental skills like judgment and reasoning.

At that point ACSUM members hit a roadblock: the University said it didn't have the money to implement the new system.

Undeterred, ACSUM took its case directly to the state legislators, who control the University budget. The members conducted informational picketing, passed out flyers, wrote hundreds of letters to members of the state appropriations committee, and testified at public hearings around the state.

Their persistence paid off when the $2.7 million bill sailed through the legislature.

"This victory means we're finally going to be paid what we deserve," says ACSUM President Margo Lister.

But money's not the only thing ACSUM members won. "Before the pay equity campaign I was proud of my work but felt shortchanged," says administrative assistant Virginia Walsh. "With the change in the classification system, I feel recognized. I've gained back my dignity as a University employee."

—Stefanie Weiss

On Other Fronts

NEA is working with support employees in dozens of school districts around the country to achieve pay equity. A few examples:

► The Orange County (Florida) Education Support Personnel Association is conducting a pay equity study. Using a questionnaire that's been professionally designed just for support staff, OESPA is surveying as many of the 4,800 ESP as possible to find out what they do in their jobs. The goal: to update job descriptions.

The school board agrees the job descriptions are outdated and is providing employees release time to fill out the questionnaires.

► Members of the Clark County (Las Vegas) Classified School Employee Association's pay equity committee have surveyed employees about their jobs, held meetings by classification, collected all relevant data, and had it coded and analyzed. They are now preparing to present their final report to the school district and use it as documentation in the next round of bargaining.

► This year, the Michigan Education Association will launch the first coordinated statewide pay equity campaign for ESP. State staff members have been trained to provide research, communications, and bargaining support for campaigns. *—S.W.*

WASHINGTON WATCH

Marching to the Beat Of a Different Drummer

The election and reelection of President Reagan were accompanied by a steady drumbeat of "get government off our backs." But it now seems evident that Reagan Administration officials were hearing what they wanted to hear. Today, Americans are clearly marching to the beat of a different drummer: get government on our side. And Congress—including members from both parties and all along the political spectrum—is right in step.

The clearest sign of that changing tempo was the vote last spring on the reauthorization of a broad range of critical federal education programs—among them Chapter 1 compensatory education programs for disadvantaged students, Chapter 2 block grants, bilingual education, impact aid, and math-science teacher education. U.S. Department of Education proposals to institute Chapter 1 vouchers and scrap dual-language instruction were quietly slipped into the circular file, and the reauthorization measure sailed through both chambers with barely a note of opposition.

Occasionally, even members of the President's own cabinet fall into stride. Last winter, after years of seeking cuts in the education budget, Education Secretary William Bennett delivered a $21 billion FY89 education budget proposal, a full $7 billion more than the Administration's FY88 request. And members of Congress, not to be outdone, are determined to add on to that before the FY89 budget process ends.

School health and safety issues—including asbestos, radon, and lead in drinking water—also are getting deserved attention in the 100th Congress.

After years of assault, civil rights protection was buttressed when Congress overrode the President's veto of the Civil Rights Restoration Act. Some 200 members of NEA's Congressional Contact Team were on hand, not just to witness, but to gain key votes for the most significant civil rights legislation in a decade.

A look back at the 100th Congress reveals renewed emphasis on children's issues: provision of child care, dropout prevention, child abuse prevention and treatment, drug abuse prevention, reduction of adolescent pregnancy, education of homeless children, and the creation of the Office of Comprehensive School Health Programs in the Department of Education. Children's issues, yes. Election issues, too. But every one designed to meet pressing national needs.

The 100th Congress also took action to protect retirees from catastrophic health care costs and to help families and individuals get off public assistance rolls and into the workforce. There doesn't seem to be any mandate to go back to the freewheeling New Deal and Great Society days, but fundamental changes like catastrophic Medicare coverage and welfare reform aren't just tinkering at the edges, either. It's a healthy signal that when the American people demand a change of pace, Congress picks up its stride.

—Michael Pons, NEA Government Relations

State Side

This month's *State Side* updates the back-to-school outlook in half the states. The October *NEA Today* will round up the remaining states.

MID-ATLANTIC

Delaware: A new evaluation system for teachers was piloted last year and will go statewide this year. Good news: teacher salaries jumped from 26th to 12th in the nation in the past three years...**Maryland:** The state board of education ruled that teachers can no longer bargain over class size and teacher evaluation reports. MSTA will work to prevent further erosion in the scope of bargaining...**North Carolina:** In the past two years, an NCAE-backed, long-term education funding plan created 4,400 new positions in schools statewide. The new jobs are primarily in rural areas where low tax bases prevent schools from offering a complete range of courses and services to students... **Overseas:** The Association is involved in a court battle to stop the government from randomly testing 10 percent of teachers working at Department of Defense Dependents Schools for drug use.

NORTHEAST

Connecticut: The state Association has prepared a 10-minute videotape and a 32-page booklet that it will be using in a series of forums this fall to drum up support for creation of a professional standards board made up mostly of teachers...**Maine:** Per capita income figures indicate the state's residents can afford to pay their teachers more, so MTA is seeking raises this year. Other goals: strengthening the state's collective bargaining law and lobbying for changes in the flawed teacher certification law...**Massachusetts:** MTA is launching a member compensation project aimed at raising salaries significantly over the next five years...**New Hampshire:** A role for teachers in the state certification process is at the top of this year's legislative agenda...**New Jersey:** To continue to carry out its "Urban Challenge" initiative, NJEA will be pushing for passage of a bond issue that would raise revenue to rebuild schools and other facilities in urban areas.

NATIONWIDE POLL

Reform Gets 'C' From Teachers

Reform has been a top priority in education since 1983, the year *A Nation At Risk* was released. But in fall 1987, when the Carnegie Foundation asked a national sample of teachers this question: "If you were to give a grade to the education reform movement, what would it be?" state-by-state the most popular response was *C*.

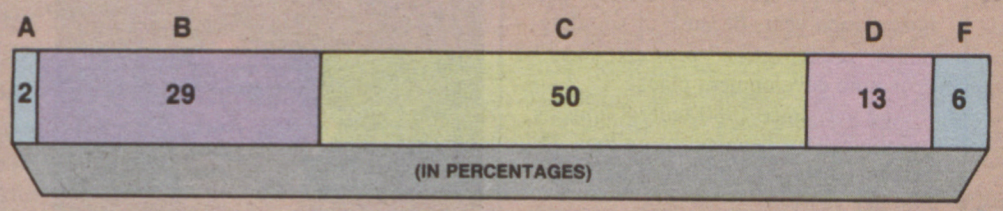
Where *C* wasn't most popular—in Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina—it was because the teachers were overwhelmingly positive. South Carolina teachers were most enthusiastic; more than half gave reform *A* or *B*, 5 percent *D* or *F*.

In Illinois, only 19 percent of teachers gave reform *A* or *B*; 31 percent, *D* or *F*.

	A	B	C	D	F
ALL TEACHERS	2%	29%	50%	13%	6%
ALABAMA	3	34	47	11	5
ALASKA	1	37	46	10	7
ARIZONA	1	29	54	15	1
ARKANSAS	4	34	48	9	5
CALIFORNIA	2	26	52	12	7
COLORADO	2	30	47	16	4
CONNECTICUT	3	34	47	11	4
DELAWARE	3	29	51	12	6
FLORIDA	1	28	51	14	6
GEORGIA	5	44	39	7	5
HAWAII	1	34	50	11	2
IDAHO	4	29	46	14	7
ILLINOIS	0	19	50	20	11
INDIANA	2	26	50	16	6
IOWA	4	23	59	10	4
KANSAS	2	32	50	11	5
KENTUCKY	3	43	43	7	3
LOUISIANA	2	42	41	12	3
MAINE	4	27	53	13	4
MARYLAND	1	28	53	13	5
MASSACHUSETTS	2	21	51	15	11
MICHIGAN	2	26	51	15	6
MINNESOTA	1	24	52	17	6
MISSISSIPPI	5	40	39	10	6
MISSOURI	2	30	49	13	6
MONTANA	1	29	44	18	9
NEBRASKA	2	29	53	11	5
NEVADA	3	32	46	14	4
NEW HAMPSHIRE	2	28	48	15	6
NEW JERSEY	3	26	56	11	4
NEW MEXICO	1	28	53	13	5
NEW YORK	2	26	53	15	4
NORTH CAROLINA	4	31	52	6	6
NORTH DAKOTA	2	23	54	14	7
OHIO	3	29	52	11	5
OKLAHOMA	1	34	46	14	6
OREGON	1	25	48	17	8
PENNSYLVANIA	2	29	48	12	8
RHODE ISLAND	1	33	51	11	5
SOUTH CAROLINA	6	46	43	3	2
SOUTH DAKOTA	1	33	52	9	4
TENNESSEE	3	25	52	12	8
TEXAS	3	33	46	10	7
UTAH	2	31	50	11	5
VERMONT	1	29	49	16	5
VIRGINIA	5	31	54	6	4
WASHINGTON	2	19	50	19	9
WEST VIRGINIA	2	33	51	10	4
WISCONSIN	2	31	50	10	6
WYOMING	2	34	48	10	8

Figures may not add up to 100 because of rounding.

Source: *Report Card on School Reform: The Teachers Speak*. Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1988.



MIDWEST

Illinois: IEA will push for a state tax hike to increase education funding and help improve teacher salaries in poor school districts. Teachers in richer districts can earn as much as $35,000 more than those in poorer districts... **Indiana:** Establishing a statewide professional standards board will be a top priority for ISTA this year...**Iowa:** Moving ahead with reform plans, teachers are using state "grant" funds for site-based decision making programs, tutoring, in-service training, special field trips, and other innovative extras...**Michigan:** MEA will try to place a school funding initiative on the ballot next spring.

PACIFIC

Alaska: NEA-Alaska chalked up a big win last year when the legislature approved bargaining rights for school support staff. Overall the Association is still pushing for more school spending to make up for nearly $100 million in cuts over the past three years...**California:** The Association is working hard to get Proposition 98 passed by voters in November. The measure would revolutionize school funding in the Golden State by guaranteeing that it be at least 39.5 percent of the state budget—the same figure as in 1986-87...**Hawaii:** The Association is lobbying state legislators to pass a bill that would limit class size, create a state teachers standards board, and allow teacher salary classification to be negotiated...**Idaho:** Association lobbying will concentrate on getting an initiative on the ballot to repeal investment tax credits (thereby expanding the tax base for education funding) and on getting a law that would grant ESP grievance rights and review of employment decisions.

WEST

Colorado: To equalize school funding, the legislature divided the state's 176 school districts into eight demographic/economic categories—and gave each its own funding formula...**Texas:** School finance is the top topic, with two groups shooting for fall reports and recommendations—a select committee appointed by Gov. Bill Clements on equalizing school spending; a symposium of education groups, with TSTA in a lead role, on making spending increases possible...**Utah:** Teachers learned a hard civics lesson from last summer's special legislative session: in an election year, a surplus in the state budget will be rebated to the taxpayers—whether or not they want it—not used to increase teacher salaries...**Wyoming:** On the November ballot there'll be a constitutional amendment to legalize the state's venerable three-tier system of property assessment, which taxes residential, agricultural, commercial, and industrial (mining) property at different rates. The state supreme court declared the system unconstitutional a year ago.

SOUTHEAST

Alabama: After two years without a raise, educators hope a special legislative session this month will pass a state school budget. The average teacher's salary has fallen from 27th in the US to 42nd during Gov. Guy Hunt's two years in office... **Arkansas:** AEA members have pitched in to get a fair tax initiative on the ballot. The state board of education raised entry standards for teachers with AEA's blessing but has angered teachers by hiring noncertificated college graduates in some fields...**Florida:** FTP/NEA has passed the 50,000-member mark and set its sights on 100,000 members by 1994. FTP/NEA also seeks a firmer base than sales tax and lottery proceeds for state school support...**Georgia:** Schools are evaluating all teachers this year—and GAE will evaluate the evaluation, making sure the Georgia Teacher Evaluation Program is properly carried out. In salaries, GAE aims to bring the state up to the national average.

OUT OF SCHOOL

There are more homeless people in the United States now than at any time since the Great Depression—and 700,000 of them are children.

No Place

Phoenix kindergarten teacher and Association member Garthanne de Ocampo still remembers the first time she had to deal with homelessness. It was eight years ago.

Five-year-old Timmy* took a bad fall off the monkey bars at recess and broke his leg. As Timmy's teacher, de Ocampo needed to reach his parents. But when she rushed to the school office to call them, she found no phone numbers listed in his records. Timmy's "address" turned out to be a vacant lot.

De Ocampo finally tracked down Timmy's grandmother after remembering she was wearing a hospital uniform when she dropped Timmy off at school.

Jane Berns, a resource specialist for special education students in California's Mt. Diablo school district, recalls how she discovered one of her students was homeless.

Joe Di Dio

de Ocampo

Andy*, a learning disabled third grader, needed special attention. Berns tried to call his mother to discuss the situation but could never find her at any of the numerous phone numbers she left with the school office. One day after school, Berns waited with Andy for his ride home.

Andy's mom arrived in a car the family clearly slept in—a car filled with people, clothes, and the smell of daily living.

Like Ocampo and Berns, thousands of education employees across America are becoming increasingly familiar with the hobos of the 1980s—homeless families with children.

The National Coalition for the Homeless estimates that there are three to four million homeless people in the United States. Families with children, who account for 40 percent of the total, are the fastest-growing segment of the homeless population.

People become homeless when, in some way, poverty collides with catastrophe in their lives. They're victims of a changing economy that's cost them their jobs. They're victims of divorce, abuse, serious illness—and, often, victims of massive cutbacks in social programs as well.

Most important, they're victims of a severe shortage of affordable housing. According to federal estimates, 2.5 million people are displaced from their homes each year, because of spiraling rents, "revitalization" projects, and economic development plans.

And yet, since 1980 federal housing programs have been cut more than 75 percent—from $32 billion to $7.5 billion per year.

For too many Americans, these facts add up to no place to call home. For nearly half of all homeless children, they also mean no place to go to school.

Citing residency requirements, many school districts refuse to enroll children with no fixed address. Other barriers include students' lack of adequate transportation or inability to provide required school and health records. Guardianship rules may bar children who are housed temporarily with family friends from enrolling in school.

The homeless children who do manage to enroll in school face other barriers. Homeless children are usually tired and hungry, so it's hard for them to concentrate. As a result, they're often performing below grade level with little chance of catching up. And they endure cruel teasing from their peers.

*Names have been changed to protect confidentiality.

Joe Di Dio

"If homeless children are with their families, 'home' is a crowded shelter, an abandoned building, maybe a car. If they are alone, 'home' is the street. They sleep in parks, eat out of dumpsters, sell their bodies to stay alive."

—NEA President Mary Hatwood Futrell

Still, homeless children in school do get a few things they desperately need—a safe, stable environment; attention; and education.

"Your first impulse when you see these kids is to rush in and buy them breakfast, take them to the doctor, and buy them new shoes," says Salt Lake City teacher and Association member Marilyn Treshow. "But you just can't do that forever. You can't do that for one of them and not for all of them.

"I have to be satisfied with small accomplishments—like a child's progress in reading—and with just being someone the kids can count on each day."

Treshow teaches homeless children at the "School with No Name," a corrugated metal shack under a major freeway crossing by the railroad tracks.

The 20-foot-square classroom serves the children of families who live in a city shelter next door. There the homeless sleep in converted railroad cars, each with eight beds. For the 75 to 100 residents, the shelter offers two bath-

ON THE STREETS

> "There's a huge population of children growing up in terrible poverty. When they get to be adults, they will be very angry people."
>
> —*Salt Lake City teacher Marilyn Treshow*
>
> shown below with homeless children she teaches at the "School with No Name."

©1988 Royce Bair

Called Home

rooms. There are no kitchens.

School district officials established the shelter school in 1984 when they realized that many homeless children weren't in school at all. The district provides a teacher, money for supplies, and lunches for the children.

"About 70 percent are behind at least one grade level, so I work on their reading and math skills," says Treshow, who is starting her fourth year at the shelter school. "If they stay for a few months, I can see some real, concrete progress."

But the shelter school lacks more than a name. Among other things, Treshow says, "We don't have a library, computers, music, physical education, or special education teachers."

Treshow points out that although the shelter school serves a critical need, "we're separating kids by economic status—discriminating against poor kids.

"Let's face it," she adds. "It's separate and unequal."

Treshow and other educators dealing with homeless children do their best to provide them with education—and hope. But they fear the consequences to each homeless child and to our country if—as predicted—homelessness continues to grow.

"There's a huge population of children growing up in terrible poverty," Treshow says. "When they get to be adults, they will be very angry people. We need to start doing something."

The 8,500 delegates to this summer's NEA Representative Assembly in New Orleans agreed.

"Starting today we, the members of NEA, must demand that all homeless children be given an education," NEA President Mary Hatwood Futrell told delegates in her keynote address.

"Like hundreds of thousands of migrant children, homeless children are denied an education simply because their parents are poor. They are victimized simply because they are victims.

"In America," Futrell continued, "this is not acceptable. No nation can build a future on a foundation of child neglect, and we are not going to let that neglect continue."

NEA convention delegates answered Futrell's call by voting overwhelmingly to support and advocate for increased federal efforts to house and educate the homeless.

With the backing of NEA, Congress has appropriated $10 million in the last two years to help states facilitate the education of homeless children. Futrell calls the Homeless Assistance Act "only a beginning."

NEA is now working for passage of the Affordable Housing Act, which would provide $15 billion a year until 7.5 million units of low-cost housing are created nationwide.

Legislation is a long-term answer, but many educators are deeply troubled about the children in their classes today.

California teacher and Association member Jane Berns can't stop thinking about Andy, the homeless third grader who lives with his family in a car.

Berns believes that Andy's learning disability was caused by the trauma of homelessness. Andy is frequently disruptive in class. He misses school often, so it's hard for him to keep up. "Basically, he hasn't learned the rules of the game," she says. "How could he?

"Andy has great potential, but because of a lack of stability and routine in his life, he won't make it. He's a beautiful person who's not going to get a chance.

"There's something radically wrong," Berns concludes, "when a country as wealthy as ours doesn't meet the needs of little minds and bodies that are hurting."

—*Stefanie Weiss*

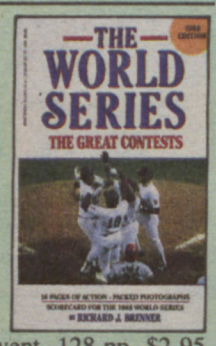
RESOURCES

Free or Inexpensive

CHILD SAFETY

What If I'm Home Alone? Informational and activities booklet gives school-aged children guidelines for avoiding harm when no adults are around. 16 pp. Single copies, $1 by check to "What If I'm Home Alone?" Corporation for Public Broadcasting, P.O. Box 33039-LK, Washington, DC 20033. (For information on bulk orders—100-copy minimum, organizational imprint available—check with Custom Print, Inc., 2611 Shirlington Rd., Arlington, VA 22206, 1-703-979-6670.)

EASY-TO-READ/SPORTS



The World Series: The Great Contests. In prose accessible to students with reading levels as low as third grade, the book tells the story of past and recent World Series and provides a scorecard for the 1988 event. 128 pp. $2.95 plus $1.25 p&h each book. (An updated 180-page companion book, ***The Complete Super Bowl Story, Games I-XXII***, is available at the same price.) Ask about quantity discounts for 25 or more copies of each title. East End Publishing, 54 Alexander Dr., Syosset, NY 11791, 1-516-364-9723.

EASY-TO-READ/COUNSELING

Sweet Illusions. Walter Dean Myers. Presents realistic fictional episodes about unmarried teenagers and pregnancy; leaves space for teenage readers to write their own story endings and focus on the implications of premarital sexual activity. 142 pp. $4.95 prepaid. Teachers & Writers Collaborative, 5 Union Square West, New York, NY 10003.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Teaching Geography: A Model for Action. Three-ring binder holds a handbook (120 pp.) that presents concepts useful in integrating geography into the curriculum and in enhancing existing geography courses. Also holds a copy of *Guidelines for Geographic Education*, prepared by the Joint Committee on Geographic Education (26 pp.). Prod. No. 30441. $10 plus p&h. For specifics, call National Geographic Society (Educational Services, Dept. 88, Washington, DC 20036) toll-free 1-800-368-2728; in Md., 1-301-921-1330.

PEDAGOGY

At-Risk, Low-Achieving Students in the Classroom. Judy Brown Lehr and Hazel Wiggins Harris. Describes ways teachers, principals, and parents can raise expectations for—and academic achievement of—hard-to-teach elementary and middle school students. 104 pp. $9.95. Stock no. 3338-8-00-F. NEA Professional Library, P.O. Box 509, West Haven, CT 06516.

TEXTBOOK REVIEWS

Bookwatch: A Candid Review of Science Textbooks. Monthly newsletter that subjects secondary science texts to the scrutiny of scholars in the relevant disciplines. Annual subscription (9 issues per school year), $15. National Center for Science Education, Inc., P.O. Box 9477, Berkeley, CA 94709.

We The People: A Review of U.S. Government and Civics Textbooks. Presents the evaluation by a six-person panel of political scientists and educators of 18 top-selling government and civics textbooks used in junior and senior high schools. (Only two of the texts get A's!) 56 pp. $6.95 prepaid. People for the American Way, 2000 M St., N.W., Suite 400, Washington, DC 20036.

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A NEW SCHOOL YEAR

In Many Ways Teachers Say, 'YOU ARE WELCOME'

Dear Jennifer,
Hope you're having a great summer.
I've been reading some wonderful
books--have you? Looking
forward to seeing you
in class.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Wright

New Jersey Newspaper

New Jersey's Helene Shalotsky and a few of her former students look over a scrapbook filled with fond memories of their sixth grade days.

Colorado Chapter 1 reading teacher Carole Wright doesn't wait for the first day of school to roll out the welcome mat for her new students. She sets a warm tone as early as July by sending picture postcards with messages like the one above to her incoming 7- to 12-year-olds at Sable Elementary School in Aurora. To make the cards especially exciting, Wright takes advantage of the fact that she's been a delegate to the NEA Representative Assembly for the past seven years, and selects cards with interesting scenes from the host city.

"That card is the first mail some of these children have ever received, which gives it all the more impact," says Wright, adding that the cards also signal parents that she cares about their children and looks forward to working with them.

Joe Di Dio

Maureen Finnerty

Second grade teacher Betty Bellamy of Fairview Elementary School in Dover, Del., gives her students an even greater personal touch—she telephones them! On the night before school opens, Bellamy calls every one of her 25 or so incoming pupils and introduces herself. She builds their anticipation with phrases like, "Guess what we're going to do tomorrow!" and asks what they'll be wearing so she can recognize them.

Idaho special education teacher Maureen Finnerty has her students keep individual scrapbooks to make them feel special.

On the first day of school, Finnerty distributes a notebook to each of her severely handicapped 5- to 10-year-olds at Temple Valley Elementary School in Idaho Falls. On the front cover is a picture of the student. Each day, Finnerty writes a brief summary of each student's progress in the appropriate book and the students take the books home to their parents.

To break the ice with both her new students and their parents, Winthrop Harbor, Ill., teacher Pat Becker sponsors a special parent evening during the first two weeks of class. The kids present a 40-minute abbreviated version of their school day—complete with attendance taking, flag salute, and lessons in every subject. Each child gets to give a rehearsed answer to a rehearsed question. At the end of the presentation, the kids test their parents on material covered and then grade the papers.

"They love that part," notes Becker, who adds that she takes advantage of the festivities to talk about her expectations and class policies. "An evening like this really opens up the lines of communication," she explains. "We all get to know one another, and the parents learn they can call me any time."

At Kings Road School in Madison, N.J., Helene Shalotsky creates a comfortable, homey atmosphere in her sixth grade classroom by starting a "family album" early in the school year and adding to it regularly. The album includes the class picture, pictures of the monthly class officers, and student-written descriptions of field trips, holiday events, dramatic presentations, and other class activities. Notes of praise from the principal, other teachers, and parents go in the scrapbook, too, and each student has a page with his or her photo and room to write thoughts.

At the end of the year, the book goes into the class library, joining albums from previous years.

Shalotsky reports that her students remember the book fondly. In later years, they often return from high school and college to visit her and relive their sixth grade days—as recorded in their class album.

Joe Di Dio

Pat Becker

At Paramus (N.J.) High School, English teacher Ruby Bishar uses a more direct approach to establish the right mood with her older, more mature senior students. On the first day of class, Bishar shares her concept of the ideal student and invites the teens to tell her what they think makes an ideal teacher.

"This exchange tells us both where we're coming from. Most important, they know what I expect of them," says Bishar.

Though the methods these teachers use may be different, the message is the same: Welcome to my classroom. I care about you and want to help you learn.

It works.

—Diane Dismuke

RESEARCH CLUES

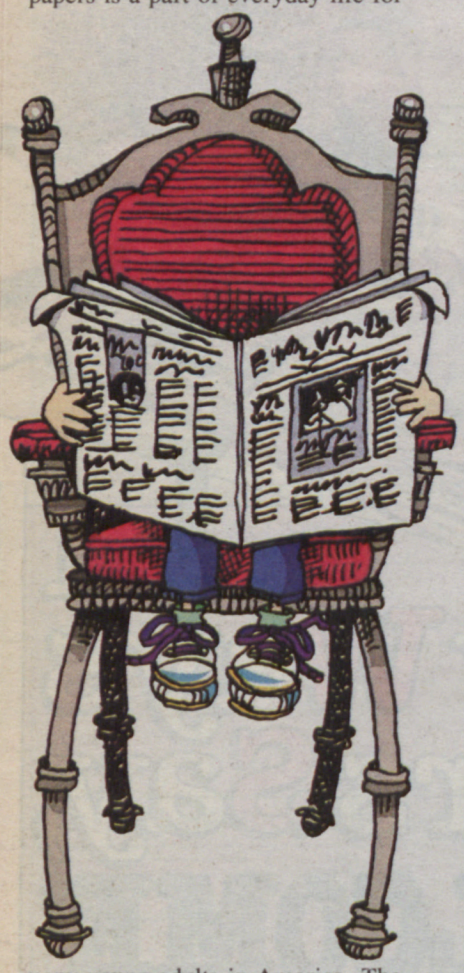
Newspapers Still Part Of Young People's Lives

By Robert McNergney

Leaders have been made and broken by them. Fortunes have been won and lost on their vision of the future. Riots have been incited over the messages they have carried. And mountains of coffee grounds have been wrapped in them and shuffled into the garbage cans of the masses. No less remarkably, many people have been educated by them.

Newspapers—maybe more than any other medium, including television—continue to shape our knowledge of the world.

Recent research by Kirsch, Junglut, and Rock suggests that reading newspapers is a part of everyday life for



many young adults in America. The researchers draw their conclusions from interviews of a nationally representative sample of 3,600 young adults aged 21 to 25.

The surprisingly encouraging results are of special interest to teachers because of what they reveal about former students' efforts to keep themselves informed and what they portend for the reading habits of present and future students.

The highlights:

► Nine out of ten young adults say they read a newspaper at least once a week. About 45 percent say they read a paper daily. Only 2 percent say they never read a newspaper.

► The level of readers' educational attainment is strongly related to the frequency of their newspaper reading. The percentage who reported reading a newspaper on a daily basis increased with each level of education completed. That is, 24 percent of those with eight years of schooling or less read a newspaper daily, as compared to 38 percent with some high school education, 41 percent of those with a high school diploma, and 52 percent of those with a college degree.

► More men than women—49 percent vs. 41 percent—report reading a newspaper on a daily basis.

► More people in the Northeast report daily readership than those in other regions of the country.

This column is based on "Reading Newspapers: The Practices of Young Adults," which is available for $3.50 from the Education Writers Association, 1001 Connecticut Ave., N.W., Washington DC 20036. Single copies of the executive summary are free while the supply lasts.

► Race and ethnicity had nothing to do with how frequently young adults read newspapers.

► More than 80 percent of young adults read news. About 86 percent read comics, TV and movie listings, and classified ads; 63 percent read society news, reviews, and horoscopes; 45 percent read sports.

► What young adults read is related to their level of education attainment. Almost 92 percent of young adults with a college degree read news compared to about 53 percent of those with less than eight years of schooling.

► The amount of TV young people watch does not affect their newspaper reading frequency. However, those who didn't read news were more inclined to be heavy TV watchers.

Young Americans are learning that reading newspapers can be informative and stimulating. One of the giants in the newspaper business, H.L.Mencken learned this lesson early in his career.

"More than once I have staggered out of editorial conferences dripping cold sweat, and wondering dizzily how God got along for so many years without the *New Republic* and the *Manchester Guardian*," he wrote. "And at other times I have marvelled that the human race did not revolt against the imposture, dig up the carcass of Johann Gutenburg, and heave it to the buzzards and hyenas in some convenient zoo."

Mencken was driven by the power of the press—a power that might be loosed in classrooms to stimulate the interest and curiosity of even many hard-to-reach students. If you use the newspaper to teach, Professor James A. Mackey, who teaches a course on the newspaper, would like to hear your ideas. Write to him at Peik Hall, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN 55455.

Robert McNergney is associate professor at the Curry School of Education, University of Virginia; Martin Haberman is professor at the School of Education, University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee. They prepared this column for NEA Today *with the cooperation of the American Educational Research Association.*

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RESOURCES

STRAIGHT UP

A new series on public television offers teachers another resource for educating kids on the dangers of drugs and alcohol.

Elementary and middle school teachers looking for ways to reinforce anti-drug and alcohol programs will want to use the upcoming three-part PBS television series "Straight Up." The first of the 30-minute programs will air sometime in October or November. Check local listings for dates

Through the eyes of Ben, a preadolescent, "Straight Up" explores pressures many youngsters face to use drugs and alcohol. Ben yearns to join a tightly knit social group known as "the gang." Although he wants to act responsibly, he lacks the skill and confidence to resist the urgings of gang members to do otherwise. A magical character named Cosmo helps him deal with the misinformation, illusions, and challenges that drug-advocating gang members create.

Each program in the series breaks at a crucial moment so teachers can discuss the drug issues with students. When the program starts again, a brief recap reminds viewers what happened in the first 15 minutes. (The program headings in this guide correspond to those on the videotape.)

STUDY GUIDE
Grade Level: 4 through 6

Program I: Knowledge and Facts

In this segment, gang members challenge Ben to join them in using alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana. Just as Ben is about to give in, Cosmo whisks him magically away in a "fate" elevator to the Dungeon of Ignorance. There Ben meets Booze and Pot, personifications of alcohol and marijuana, who try to trick him into accepting as reality myths about drugs. But Ben's magic headband supplies him with the facts and enables him to counteract the myths. When he returns to reality, he tells the gang what he's learned.

Suggested Points for Discussion

Part I

► Define *drug*. (A drug is any chemical substance other than food that changes our mind or body.) Discuss the difference between legal and illegal, helpful and harmful drugs, and between the use and misuse of drugs.

► What are some of the myths that Ben was challenged with? (Alcohol isn't a drug. Marijuana is a drug that is impossible to get hooked on.)

Part II

► What facts did Ben learn about alcohol, marijuana, and tobacco?

► How do you think Ben felt when he succeeded in turning down the gang's offer to use drugs?

Program II: Attitudes and Perceptions

In this segment, gang members again pressure Ben to use drugs in order to be one of the gang. Although Ben is now armed with knowledge and facts, he doesn't possess the attitudes and perceptions that would help him see through the allurement of the gang. Ben takes a second ride in Cosmo's fate elevator. This time he travels to the Land of Illusion, where Booze and Pot use a variety of illusions and advertising techniques to try to deceive him. Thanks to magic eyeglasses, he's able to see through their tricks.

Suggested Points for Discussion

Part I

► What images and messages do drug advertisers use to persuade people to use their products?

► How did Booze and Pot attempt to entice Ben into smoking and drinking with them?

Part II

► Define and discuss *illusion*. (An illusion is a false image or appearance.)

► Review and discuss the six advertising techniques presented in the program (Join the Crowd, Health and Beauty, Clean and Fresh, Thirst-Quencher, Rich and Famous, and Comparison).

► Why did Tony decide to leave the gang and join Ben in walking away from the group?

Program III: Self-Image and Life Skills

In this segment, Ben knows the facts and perceptions about drugs, but lacks the skill and confidence to resist gang pressure to use them. Faced with being excluded from the gang and deserted by his new friend Tony, Ben takes his third and last ride in Cosmo's fate elevator. He visits Drug City, where his magic chain of command aids him in his battle against Booze and Pot. Finally he defeats this drug duo by acquiring the self-confidence to say "no" once and for all.

Suggested Points for Discussion

Part I

► Ben now knows about drugs and advertising techniques. What do you think Ben gained from having the courage to work through Drug City?

► What do you think you would gain from having the courage to refuse drugs?

Part II

► Define *self-image*. Discuss what people can do to improve their self-image. (Self-image is the impression or idea we have of ourselves—how we imagine ourselves to look or be.)

► Discuss how drugs give an illusion of happiness—which is only temporary and is usually followed by unpleasant aftereffects.

► What could Ben, Tony, Sue, and Robbie do to help Kevin?

► Discuss community resources available to children and stress it's important for children to talk with adults they can trust rather than try to solve their own problems.

Written by Beth Ann Lundy and edited for KCET-TV in Los Angeles by KIDSNET. Permission granted to copy for classroom use.

Need Additional Resources?

KCET-TV has distributed some 10,000 "Straight Up" videocassettes and two-page teacher guides to public school districts, private schools, federal regional drug education projects, and schools operated by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Department of Defense overseas.

You may order additional 90-minute videocassettes in either ½" format for $19.95 each plus tax/shipping, or three 30-minute, ¾" format at $207 plus tax/shipping from Richard Cook, Manager, Distribution Dept., KCET–TV, 4401 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90027. A 48-page instructional guide including lesson plans, student worksheets, vocabulary, and role-playing exercises is available for $3.50 plus postage from the same address.

To borrow copies of the tapes and guides, contact the National Clearinghouse on Alcohol and Drug Information, P.O. Box 2345, Rockville, MD 20852 (1-301/468-2600).

People

Elisa Olderman

"I demand perfection from my ballplayers—and I get it," says **Mary Alice Robbins** of Sardis, Ga. But in Robbins' case, perfection wasn't good enough.

By 1987, Robbins, a 30-year veteran coach working at Sardis-Girard-Alexander High School, had led her girls' basketball teams to more victories than any other active coach in the country. By 1988, she was labeled a troublemaker—and teaching elementary P.E., with no coaching duties. But this fall, with the help of the Georgia Association of Educators, she's back in the newly-consolidated Burke High School, teaching P.E. and coaching—with back pay for the year she missed.

Robbins' troubles began when she stood by one of her students in a complicated disagreement and found the superintendent on the opposing side. Eventually, in frustration, the student's mother went to the legal aid agency.

Still, Robbins, whose teams had won some 500 games during her career, found herself on the bench. "I'm not a trouble maker," Robbins says. "But if anyone makes trouble for me, I'll see them in court." As it turned out, she didn't have to. Lawyers from GAE's legal network filed a federal suit on her behalf at the end of April, and in May Robbins was offered a contract to teach and coach at the high school this school year.

"I went to the Association," Robbins sums up, "they got me the lawyers, and they took care of everything."

At Brighton (Utah) High School, aerospace science teacher **John Barainca** sends students—mostly his own, but sometimes younger kids like the ones on the right—into simulated outer space. For up to five full days, the kids eat, sleep, and do experiments just as they would on a Skylab mission.

"The purpose of the simulation is to teach the research process," Barainca explains. "Students do experiments—on biorhythmicity, for example, or hand-eye coordination under stress."

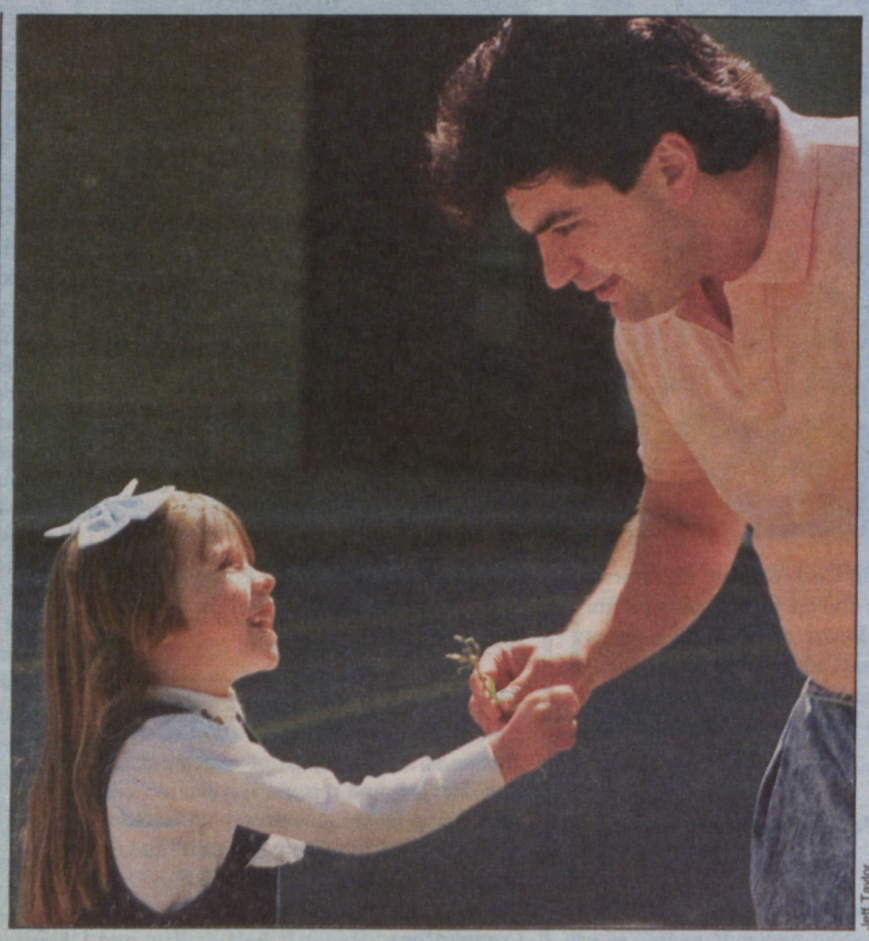
"The kids in space wear shorts and T-shirts just like Skylab astronauts," Barainca continues. "Their food is either fresh, nonperishable, or reconstitutable. Behind one curtain they've got running water; behind another, a chemical toilet." All the missions, he notes, are single-sex.

Where are Barainca and the rest of the class during the five-day mission? Five or six feet away, in Barainca's classroom, taking turns at a Mission Control console. They monitor the astronauts with five TV cameras, maintain short-distance radio contact with them, and think up "emergencies" for them to handle.

Being one of only two males out of 237 Montgomery County, Md., kindergarten teachers doesn't faze **Vince Fazzalare** a bit. "I really enjoy kids this age," says the 10-year teaching veteran, who's also taught first and second graders. Fazzalare's used to the odd looks people give him when he tells them he teaches kindergarten—and he admits he gets angry sometimes. "I'd like to talk about my teaching ability, or my methods of relating to kids," notes Fazzalare, "instead of always explaining why I decided to teach kindergarten."

In college, Fazzalare intended to become an actor or an attorney, but he decided on teaching after he helped put on a pageant for deaf children. "That's when I knew I wanted to work with kids," says Fazzalare, "and I've never regretted my decision."

The other male kindergarten teacher in Montgomery County is Association member Steven Weng.



Jeff Taylor

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"The Association supported me when my own school board wouldn't," says California kindergarten teacher **Gail Jones**, who competed in the Boston Marathon last April 18, "so I ran the race under CTA/NEA colors."

The Weaverville elementary school board refused to grant Jones two days of paid personal or professional leave to participate in the Marathon. Fellow teachers were quick to show support, however. The CTA/NEA Redding Service Center Council, which serves Jones's own Weaverville Elementary Teachers Association and other northern California locals, set up a fund to receive donations to cover her lost pay and other expenses.

"I ran in Boston wearing a T-shirt with the letters 'CTA' and the CTA logo on the front and the NEA logo on the back," Jones recalls. "It was exhilarating to hear spectators call out, 'Go CTA!'"

"Fellow teachers understood what the board majority did not," Jones continues, "that students would see me as a role model and that running in the Marathon was simply an extension of the fitness activities—most of them done on my own time—that I had long been doing with the students at school."

Fortunately, Jones's husband Ernie was able to cheer her on in Boston because his employer, the Trinity High School district, gave him two days of paid leave for "civic endeavor."

Jones, who was seeded 742nd in the women's race, finished 285th, with a time of 3 hours, 26 minutes, and 45 seconds over the 26.2-mile course.

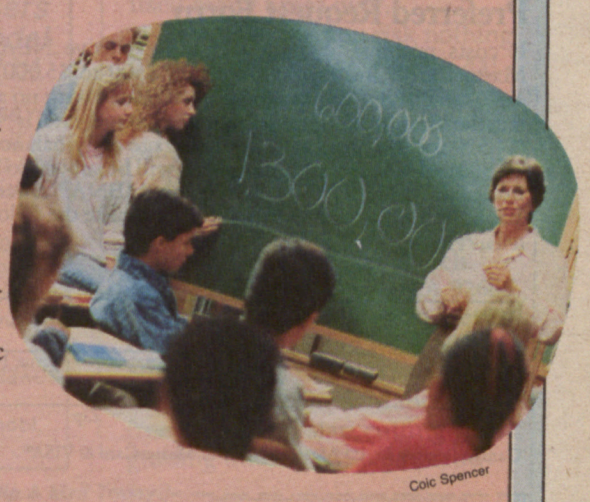
Coic Spencer

You've probably seen them—the four 30- and 60-second NEA TV and radio ads that feature Association members **Stephanie Taylor** (above), **Cesar Anthony Torres** (directly below), and **Beverly Craveiro** (bottom) discussing how inadequate school funding undermines learning. By asking viewers and listeners "What's more important than investing in our kids?" the spots put the funding issue directly in the laps of voters this critical election year.

Coic Spencer

Taylor, who's substitute teaching in the Los Angeles school system while working on her Ph.D., stars in a spot about overcrowded classrooms. Torres—who has taught in Brockport, N.Y., and Los Angeles—talks about the loss of electives like art and music. Craveiro, who has a California lifetime teaching credential in K-12 music, discusses the teacher shortage.

The fourth TV spot addresses teacher salaries. The opening shot shows a deserted classroom. The camera zooms in on a withered apple on the teacher's desk, and an announcer says, "For years we've been getting teachers at bargain prices. The sale is over."


Coic Spencer

The ads ran on CNN—the Cable News Network—four times during the Democratic Convention in July and four times during the Republican Convention in August. They're slated to air several times during September and October on NBC-TV's *News at Sunrise*, *Today Show*, *Nightly News*, and *Sunday Today*, on ABC-TV's *World News This Morning*, *Good Morning America*, *Weekend Report*, and *This Week with David Brinkley*, on CNN and on INN, the Independent News Network. There are different versions of several ads, including two in Spanish.

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CFBS

BOOK BEAT

Books That Guide Teachers

Ask teachers about books that are important to their teaching, and they'll tell you about books that help them help their students connect—with words, with mainstream culture, with foreign cultures.

For Beverly Ausfahl of Pueblo, Colo., the important book is *Teacher* by the New Zealander Sylvia Ashton-Warner (Touchstone, $7.95).

Ausfahl

"In *Teacher*, Ashton-Warner tells how she taught Maori children to read by starting them on words important in their culture," Ausfahl says. "That was just the right approach for my own students too.

"I was one of a group of Colorado teachers on a Fulbright program in Kenya in 1985. We came back with a trunkful of artifacts for our students. To make these items understandable we suggested that the kids think first about U.S. equivalents. For instance, they might start with the Gerry™ backpack that Americans use to carry babies and then look at *konga*, squares of cloth that Africans have long used for the same purpose," Ausfahl explains.

Teacher also influenced Katie Johnson, a primary teacher in Bowdoin, Maine. Johnson followed Ashton-Warner in using words children think are important to teach them how to write—and described the approach in her book *Doing Words* (Houghton Mifflin, $15.95).

Johnson

"I moved from a freer approach to teaching writing to a freer approach to teaching reading," Johnson says, "and got enthusiastic about the 'whole language' approach to teaching reading comprehension.

"What's revolutionary about 'whole language' is that it says to teachers: hook beginning readers on books by taking a real story and reading it out loud straight through. Then ask the kids to talk about their own reactions. Only after that should you go back and ask specific comprehension questions."

Farmer

Johnson says these are some of the best whole-language books: Judith M. Newman's *Whole Language: Theory and Use* (Heinemann, $15); Frank Smith's *Essays into Literacy* (Heinemann, $12.50); Kenneth Goodman's short, simple *What's Whole in Whole Language* (Heinemann, $7.50).

Mike Farmer, science teacher in Greer, S.C., and state candidate for Teacher in Space, takes Bertrand Russell as a mentor. The great mathematician and philosopher wrote four essays on the education of children.

"In one essay," Farmer says, "Russell said something like 'to be a successful teacher, don't forget your own childhood.' That has helped me remember that my students are not like me as I am now. They're children—or adolescents—with the special problems of youth."

Farmer recommends *The Basic Writings of Bertrand Russell*, edited by R. E. Egner and L. E. Denonn (Touchstone, $14.95). His own book, *Science Projects Computerized* is $7.95 from Box 193, Tigerville, SC 29688.

Maria Arias, primary bilingual English/Spanish teacher in the Ysleta school district, El Paso, Texas, finds her subject continually "under scrutiny." Which means, Arias says: "we not only have to teach bilingually but also to defend our decision to do so." For that Arias sends her adult students at the University of Texas, El Paso, to the *NABE News* and *NABE Journal* (both from the National Association for Bilingual Education, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036). Or, for "cons" as well as "pros," to S. B. Zakariya's "How To Keep Your Balance When It Comes to Bilingual Education" *(American School Board Journal*, June 1987).

Arias

Stephen Schwandt teaches English at Irondale High School outside Minneapolis and writes young adult novels—the latest is *Holding Steady* (Henry Holt, $13.95).

"A major influence on my teaching," says Schwandt, "is William E. Coles, Jr., author of *The Plural I*.

"I'd started out by teaching the usual forms of writing—the five-paragraph essay, for example," Schwandt explains. "But my students couldn't seem to write about their own experience. I knew they couldn't possibly be as boring as their writing made them look.

Schwandt

"Then I met Coles, a freshman composition teacher, at a workshop," Schwandt explains. "His technique is to sequence assignments in a way that opens up the essay form and allows kids to write for themselves, not just for the teacher."

Coles's most recent books are: *The Plural I—and After* (Boynton/Cook-Heinemann, $15), which includes *The Plural I* plus two additional essays; *Seeing Through Writing* (Harper & Row, $18.95); and *What Makes Writing Good* (Heath, $17).

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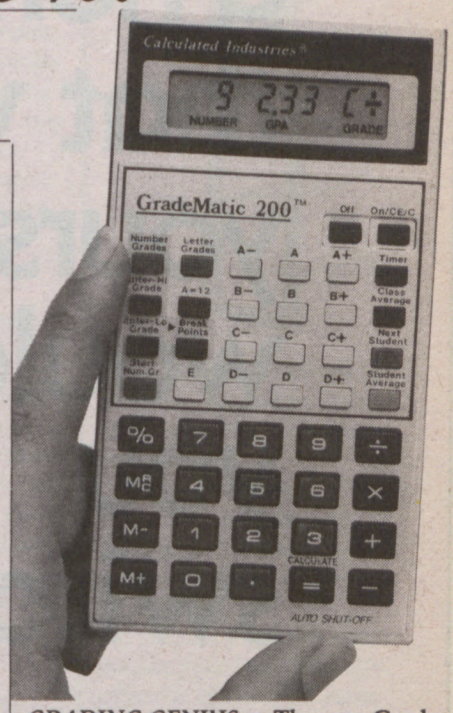

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INTERNATIONAL

Giving Your Students a Voice

The study of human rights can spark students' interest in a wide range of subjects and skills—and, regrettably, many violations of human rights are ready at hand as subjects of study. Forty years after the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, governments are still imprisoning people for their political beliefs, and they're still torturing and killing their prisoners. These policies, notes the human rights organization Amnesty International, violate some of our most basic rights.

Amnesty International (AI), which numbers some 700,000 members in 150 countries, was founded in 1961 to combat the violation of human rights. Over the years, it has taken a range of approaches to eliminating systematic human rights abuses. A central tactic is to write thousands of letters or telegrams of protest to governments that are torturing or killing prisoners or are imprisoning people solely for their political opinions, their color or ethnicity, their sex, their language or religion. AI calls these people, who have neither committed nor advocated violence, *prisoners of conscience*.

School employees are often special targets of persecution, because they're likely to inspire students with the ideals of human rights and the desire to claim and defend those rights. Too often, children and young people themselves are imprisoned, tortured, and even killed.

Learning of such situations can move students to dig deeper into geography, history, current events. Where is a particular abuse of human rights taking place? Why is it taking place there? What is the cultural background? What are the forces in conflict?

After establishing a clear picture of the events in question, their environment, and their causes, many students choose to communicate—perhaps even protest—violations of human rights. Writing letters or articles, composing and performing plays, expressing reactions through music or the graphic arts or video production are some of the ways students may select to spread information and share their outlook.

AI's U.S. chapter has recently initiated several projects especially suitable for students. A few of these projects, and ways your class can take part in them, are described below.

To begin with, AI is developing several secondary-level curriculums analyzing rights and giving information about human rights violations. A curriculum on the use of torture is available, one on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is being tested, and one on the death penalty is being developed.

For more information, contact Amnesty International USA, 655 Sutter Street, Suite 402, San Francisco, CA 94102 (phone: 415/441-3733).

If, after studying human rights, your students decide they want to take action to protect those rights, AI has several suggestions.

► AI distributes a special, carefully-written children's edition of some of its Urgent Action Alerts. These describe cases in which a flood of letters to a government may stop torture or even save a life. Students who want to receive the Urgent Action Alerts can contact the Urgent Action Network, Amnesty International USA, P.O. Box 1270, Nederland, CO 80466-1270 (303/440-0913).

► AI is currently sponsoring a creative expression project for children in grades 2 through 8. Students can submit drawings, paintings, collages, essays, poems, stories, or songs on human rights subjects. The instructions for the contest are themselves a lesson plan, suggesting rights cases involving elementary-age children.

The contest winners will be announced at a ceremony at the United Nations headquarters in New York on December 10.

For contest instructions, contact your local Amnesty office or chapter; for more information, call AI's San Francisco office (see phone number above).

► Finally, "Human Rights Now!" is an AI campaign to collect signatures on an appeal *(in box at left)* supporting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly on December 10, 1948.

The appeal, with signatures, should be returned by October 31 to Amnesty International Human Rights Now! Appeal, 322 Eighth Avenue, New York, NY 10001.

The Human Rights Now! Appeal

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.

This is the historic promise of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, proclaimed by governments in the United Nations 40 years ago.

We, the undersigned, add our names to this declaration, demanding that it be respected by all governments throughout the world.

In country after country, even the right to speak up in defense of human rights is being crushed. Thousands have been jailed or tortured for demanding and exercising their rights. Many have "disappeared" or been killed.

These abuses must stop. We call on all governments to ratify the world's human rights treaties, to bring their own laws and practices into line with them, and to act to protect human rights worldwide.

On behalf of the victims who have been seized and silenced, we appeal to every government and to the United Nations to protect all those, wherever they may be, who raise their voices in defense of human rights.

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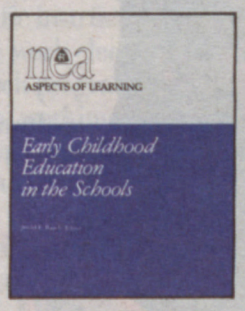

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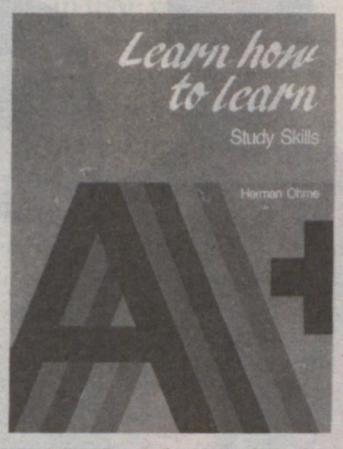

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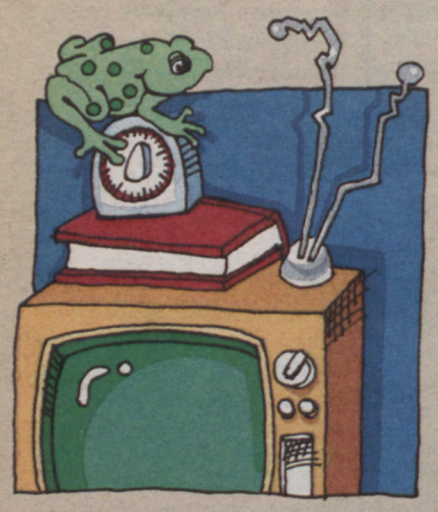
READER POLL RESULTS

'The Best Purchase I Ever Made'

In the March issue, *NEA Today* asked readers to name the most useful thing they'd ever personally bought for their classrooms. Their answers outlined a range of items—mostly simple and inexpensive—that meet a need or solve a problem.

Most of the buys cited in response were decidedly low-tech. Joanna Smaltz's students at Grove Elementary School in Durham, N.C., are visually impaired and have other handicaps. For them, Smaltz has found, her six-minute timer was a real gem of a purchase. They used to frequently interrupt class to ask when the next activity would start. Now they know that when the timer goes off—and not a moment sooner—it's time to move on.



A happy-face stamp cheers on the special education students in Royce Grice's Broomfield, Colo., class. Grice walks around and imprints the face on the papers of students who are working quietly, so they know their good behavior hasn't gone unnoticed.

Some purchases have truly stood the test of time. In 1962 Virginia Wimer bought a set of plastic two-inch-high letters—and the same set is still in use on the bulletin boards in her San Clemente, Calif., classroom. The pitch pipe that Margaret Foster Fox used in her Marysville, Calif., classroom brought so much more life to the class that when she retired she passed it on to her daughter, also a teacher.

Every year, Mary Lee Whelan buys a theme book for each of her second graders at Spring Hill School in Jeffersonville, Ind. These become the children's Creative Writing Books, in which they spend 15 minutes a day writing on themes from current events and family to feelings and fantasy. At the end of the year, they take the books home and go on writing.

New Jersey's Margaret Jimenez brought a Kermit the Frog puppet into her music classroom one St. Patrick's Day, and it's stayed on as a favorite teaching tool. Even the shyest students like to act out songs with the puppet.

Linda Heinrich bought a broken television set for 50¢ at a yard sale and brought it into her fifth grade classroom at Salem Ave. School in Hagerstown, Md. Along with old radios, clocks, and small appliances that students bring in, the TV's a good teaching tool for students who dissect it in the "take-apart" corner.

A tape recorder is Bonnie Jones's technology of choice. Her Van Wert, Ohio, third graders read into the machine, then she listens to the tapes later and writes comments. She also uses the machine to play background accompaniment for songs in social studies, health, and other subjects.

Several teachers have found items that help them organize their work. Lisa Rae Anderson, a first grade teacher at Northern Hills Elementary School in Norfolk, Nebr., likes the three plastic stacker trays on her desk. Joyce Waters, who teaches at Ellenboro (N.C.) Elementary School, stores sets of worksheets in a compartmentalized shoe holder.

Julie Barich-Davison teaches a la carte—shopping cart, that is. Purchased for $10 from a lumber yard, the cart keeps Barich-Davison organized as she wheels between three classrooms to teach science at Milwaukie (Oreg.) High School.

Perhaps, after all, it isn't the tool so much as the person using it. Mik Sutton teaching in Mason-Lake Independent School District in Ludington, Mich., wrote of an inexpensive implement that organizes, makes her students look special and successful, and improves their self-concepts: her pen.

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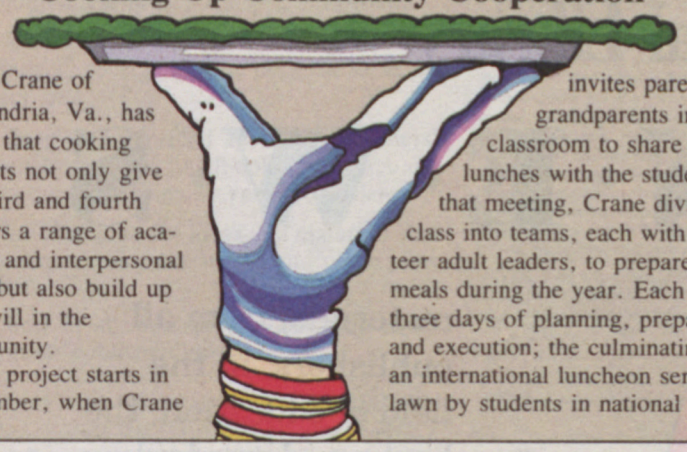
IDEA EXCHANGE

Cooking Up Community Cooperation



Mary Crane of Alexandria, Va., has found that cooking projects not only give her third and fourth graders a range of academic and interpersonal skills but also build up goodwill in the community.

The project starts in September, when Crane invites parents and grandparents into the classroom to share sack lunches with the students. At that meeting, Crane divides the class into teams, each with two volunteer adult leaders, to prepare four meals during the year. Each meal takes three days of planning, preparation, and execution; the culminating meal is an international luncheon served on the lawn by students in national costumes and accompanied by original poems, stories, crafts, and plays.

In connection with the cooking projects, Crane teaches lessons on nutrition, good eating habits, and consumer buying, as well as cooking, safety in the kitchen, cleaning up, and table manners. Students expand their math, reading, and language arts skills, Crane says—and in addition, planning and carrying out food purchases helps them develop assertiveness and self-reliance. Beyond that, she notes, they come to realize that education can be practical—and taste good too.

Spelling Out Rewards

When Marie Eaglin wants to reward her kindergarten class at Grand Coteau (La.) Elementary School for the students' good behavior, she gives them a "magic" letter—part of a "magic" word. Then when they show special cooperative behavior in, say, lining up for the lunchroom, she begins creating that word. As the good behavior adds up, the magic letters accumulate in a series of boxes drawn on the chalkboard. When all the boxes are filled in, the letters they contain spell a word like *bingo, filmstrip, treats,* or *game*—and the class gets exactly what the letters spell.

The Name Game

When students are fascinated by writing their own names, they're ripe for a favorite project of Joan Mary Macey, who teaches art in the Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson Elementary Schools in Binghamton, N.Y.

Macey gives each student a piece of colored construction paper 6″ x 18″ (half of a 12″ x 18″ sheet), which they fold into a piece 6″ by 9″. Starting at the fold, they write their names in big letters, then trace around them to make solid letters they can cut out, leaving the two halves of the paper joined at the fold. The names can be used to identify folders, Macey says, noting that they're a big hit on Parents' Night.

Food for Thought

Gayle Erskine, a consumer and family studies teacher at Prairie Middle School in the Cherry Creek, Colo., school district, has found an activity that increases class interest, decreases tardiness, and gets students involved at the outset in Home Ec/Foods lessons. Her secret? Play a modified version of the popular TV game show "Wheel of Fortune."

The students at each kitchen work station form a team, and every team whose members get to class on time is eligible to play.

Erskine draws a space on the chalkboard for each letter of a word relating to the current lesson—for example, V-I-T-A-M-I-N. Each eligible team is allowed to guess letters, and each correct letter is filled in on the board, until the puzzle is solved. The winning team receives extra credit points, extra food to prepare in the lab, or extra money for their lab budget.

Erskine says the game gives students a powerful reason to be on time—and it can be adapted for any subject.

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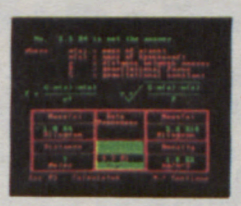

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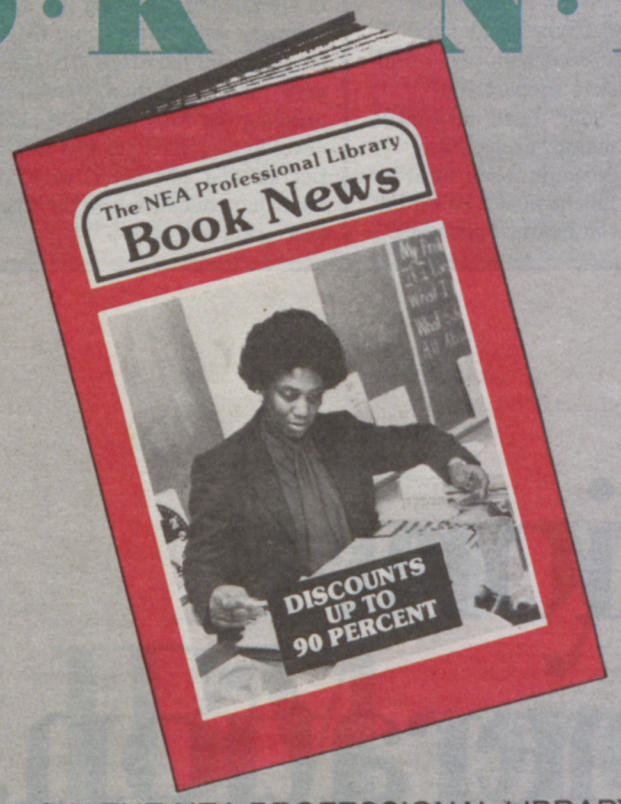

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Kidsworld—*CBN. Saturdays, 9:30-10 p.m. ET, and Sundays, 12:30-1 p.m. ET, beginning Sept. 3. Sept. 3 and 4:* News about a racing cart club, an elementary school's steel orchestra, "lensless" photography, and an interview with actor Bruce Weitz. *Sept 10 and 11*: News about a championship ice skater, a circus performer, a sprinter and jumper, and an interview with actor John Stamos. *Sept. 17 and 18:* News about a children's water polo club, a rope jumping team, and interviews with two child filmmakers and actor David Huddleston. *Sept. 24 and 25:* News about a 14-year-old Olympic gymnast hopeful, a basketball program for elementary school kids, a young team of entertainers from New Orleans, and an interview with actress Julia Duffy.

Equinox—*Discovery Channel, Mondays, 11 p.m.-midnight ET, and Wednesdays, 6-7 p.m. ET, beginning Sept. 5.* Seventeen-part series examines aspects of science ranging from technology and engineering to design and medicine.

Living Dangerously: The Everest Challenge—*Arts & Entertainment Channel, Wednesday, Sept. 7, 9-10 p.m. ET.* A group of young Australians climb Mt. Everest during the dangerous avalanche season.

Ramona—*PBS, Saturdays, 7:30-8:00 p.m. ET, beginning Sept. 10.* Ten-part series about the adventures of eight-year-old Ramona Quimby, a character created by author Beverly Cleary.

Lugosi—The Forgotten King—*Discovery Channel, Sunday, Sept. 11, 10-11:30 p.m. ET; check local listings for rebroadcast dates.* Documentary about the career of Hungarian actor Bela Lugosi–from his struggle to reach the top of the Broadway stage to his success in the role of Count Dracula.

Vanity Fair—*Arts & Entertainment channel, Sundays, 9-9:30 p.m. ET, beginning Sept. 11.* BBC 16-part series based on the William Makepeace Thackeray classic about two girls who meet at boarding school—one an orphan pushing to better herself, the other well-to-do and sweet-natured. For a free study guide, write to Arts & Entertainment, Community Development, 555 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10017.

Afterschool Specials—*ABC-TV, Thursday, Sept. 15, 4-5 p.m. ET:* "Date Rape." When a girl is forced by her boyfriend to have sex with him, she takes him to court. *Thursday, Sept. 29, 4-5 p.m. ET:* "Losing a Sister" (working title). A teenager feels emptiness and guilt following the sudden death of her older sister.

What's Wrong with Wilma?—*ABC-TV, Thursday, Sept. 15, 8-8:30 p.m. ET.* Animated special about drug abuse, featuring the Flintstone kids.

The Adventures of Raggedy Ann and Andy—*CBS-TV, Saturdays 8-8:30 a.m. ET, beginning Sept. 17.* Raggedy Ann and Raggedy Andy come to life in a little girl's playroom and try to help solve their friends' problems.

Encyclopedia (photo)—*HBO, Mondays, 7:30-8 p.m. ET, beginning Sept. 19.* Fast-paced collection of comedy sketches and original songs, featuring an eight-member ensemble and state-of-the-art visuals. For a free study guide, write to HBO Subscriber Services, 1100 Ave. of the Americas, New York, NY 10020.

Centennial Celebration of Eugene O'Neill's Birth—*National Public Radio, sometime in Sept.; check local listings for dates and times.* The series includes O'Neill's "The Moon of the Caribbees," "Bound East for Cardiss," "In the Zone," "The Long Voyage Home," and a two-part documentary— "Jose Quintero Directs O'Neill."

Maria Callas: In Her Own Words—*American Public Radio, beginning in September; check local listings for dates and times.* Four one-hour broadcasts about the life and career of the world famous soprano from her apprenticeship days to her final tragic years.

Regular People—*PBS, sometime in Sept.; check local listings for dates and times.* A look at mainstreaming in two upstate New York schools, through the eyes of the teachers, students, and parents involved.

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Your NEA

TAKING A STAND

Delegates Chart NEA Course

Change. NEA's 1988 Representative Assembly in New Orleans, July 4-7 was about *effecting* change—and not about reacting to it.

NEA President Mary Hatwood Futrell, in her keynote address to the 8,400 delegates, called for the creation of Learning Laboratories—one district in each state—where innovative and creative new ways of educating students would take place.

There was talk of change in NEA's membership too, as the total moved past the 1.9 million-member mark and closer to the goal of 2 million-plus members. (See President's Viewpoint on page 2 for more about this goal.) In the past year alone, noted NEA Executive Director Don Cameron in his address to delegates, more than 50,000 school employees joined NEA.

There was talk of political change as well—especially change in the White House. Delegates dug deep into their pockets to contribute a record $291,000 to NEA-PAC, the Association's political action arm. The Illinois Education Association delegation led all state delegations by contributing over $20,000 to NEA-PAC.

Delegates also debated the Associ-

"We in NEA never rest on our laurels," NEA President Mary Hatwood Futrell told delegates. "Yesterday is not the test. Tomorrow is. Let us unleash our creativity. Let us dare to break old molds; let us start building the schools of tomorrow."

Joe Di Dio

Joe Di Dio

Joan Vaughn Walker, a Michigan delegate, spoke in support of a proposal calling for a new NEA-led multimedia initiative to alert youngsters to the dangers of substance abuse. Delegates approved the idea.

Joe Di Dio

Sixteen-year-old Ryan White, an AIDS victim, asked delegates' help in teaching facts, not myths, about the disease.

Joe Di Dio

60 Minutes' ***Ed Bradley, a former teacher, moderated a pre-RA session on the implications of school-based reforms. NEA members from across the country discussed their local school reform projects.***

Jazz funeral marchers—representing all NEA affiliates and led by NEA Vice-President Keith Geiger and Louisiana Association of Educators President Virginia Budd—dramatized the need to bury public school neglect. Inset photo: some members of the Missouri NEA delegation.

on Sea of Change

ation's Legislative Program and Resolutions and adopted 54 New Business Items.

Delegates reelected Secretary-Treasurer Roxanne Bradshaw and Executive Committee member Roz Schliefe of Wisconsin, while selecting Michigan's Edith Swanson to fill a slot on the nine-member Executive Committee. They also picked Californian Michael Downey to fill a three-year at-large ESP seat on the NEA Board of Directors and reelected Peggy Bertollo of Delaware to a second term as ESP representative. Patsy Watson of North Carolina was also elected to fill an ESP vacancy. Floridian Roy Weatherford was the delegates' choice for higher education representative on the NEA Board.

In response to growing demands on the Association, delegates backed the NEA Board's unanimous approval of a $125 million budget, 36 percent of which will be returned to state and local affiliates.

So it was that delegates left NEA's 67th Representative Assembly feeling they had appropriately fine-tuned the Association's policies and goals to continue NEA's leading role in education today and into the future.

Joe Di Dio

NEA Executive Director Don Cameron noted that 42 affiliates had increased membership last year, with Florida and its 11,000-member increase leading the way. In all, NEA membership increased by more than 50,000 last year.

Joe Di Dio

Anna Rivera, a delegate from Arizona, makes a point during discussion of a New Business Item concerning Association boycotts. See page 28 for details of current boycotts that NEA is supporting.

Joe Di Dio

California's David Hernandez spoke in favor of a New Business Item making additional English and citizenship classes available to people new to this country.

Joe Di Dio

Mississippi Association of Educators President Peggy Peterson successfully sought convention support for Jackson teachers.

Joe Di Dio

Your NEA

REACHING OUT

Coming Soon: ESP, Issues Magazines

NEA's two specialized annual magazines for members are currently in preparation. A 56-page publication for ESP members, due out in October, will be chock-full of news about members and their Associations. The magazine will also contain the latest information on ESP issues, including specific wages and salaries paid school support staff around the nation.

Early next January, NEA teacher members will receive the second edition of NEA's annual journal. *Issues '89* will feature in-depth pieces on topics that will be concerning educators next year and beyond, written by thought-provoking authors based in schools, colleges and universities, government, and business and industry.

NEA Conference Series Set for 1988-89

"Fulfilling the American Promise: Invest in Public Education" is the theme of the 1988-89 NEA National Conference Series.

The first conference—"Teaching Students of Today for Tomorrow"—will be held in Atlanta, Ga., Nov. 11-13. "Education and the New Economy," the second in the series, will take place in San Diego, Calif., March 3-5, 1989. The final conference, "Association Advocacy: What Serves Learners Serves Education Employees," will be in Denver, Colo., April 7-9, 1989.

Registration information and further details of each conference will appear in *NEA NOW*, the weekly newsletter mailed to NEA leaders.

Prepare Now for Special Week

It's not too early to start preparing for American Education Week, Nov. 13-19. This year's theme: "America's Schools: Invest in Your Future."

By now your local Association should have received a set of materials from NEA to help you and your colleagues plan a successful observance. The set includes an American Education Week poster and a resource guide containing radio public service announcements, sample news releases, information about many local project ideas, and reproducible art for flyers, buttons, handouts, and newsletters.

A limited number of additional sets are available for $5.95 each (stock no. 5050-9-90-CY). Packets of 10 posters are also available for $9.95 each (stock no. 5054-1-90-CY). Both are offered on a first-come, first-served basis. To order, write the NEA Professional Library, Box 509, West Haven, CT 06516.

Celebrate U.S. Constitution...

Honor the U.S. Constitution—observe Constitution Day, September 17, in your classroom. Let your students reflect on the important guarantees the U.S. Constitution provides them.

NEA supports the multi-year celebration of the Constitution's Bicentennial. The Constitution and its guarantees of free speech, due process, and other rights are topics that teachers can incorporate into classroom discussions throughout the year, every year.

...and Peace Day

Observe the International Day of Peace—Sept. 20 this year—to help your students better understand the roots of violence and the importance of resolving conflict peacefully.

For suggested classroom projects, check the NEA brochure on Peace Day that was mailed to your local affiliate last spring.

Peace Day, observed since 1981, falls on the third Tuesday in September, to coincide with the opening of the UN General Assembly session.

NEA Boycott Update

NEA is currently supporting boycotts against Red Coach lettuce, California table grapes, Shell Oil, and Trans World Airlines.

The lettuce boycott is in response to the United Farm Workers of America's campaign to pressure grower Bruce Church to bargain in good faith with the union. The grape boycott also supports the UFW, this time in its effort to force growers to grant farm workers free and fair representation elections in the field, to bargain in good faith with farm workers when those elections have been certified, to ban the use of five toxic chemicals in the fields, and to agree to pesticide residue testing of table grapes.

The Shell Oil boycott is part of an international campaign initiated by the anti-apartheid group Trans-Africa. The campaign puts economic pressure on Royal Dutch/Shell, the world's second largest corporation, to end its economic support of South Africa. Shell Oil is a subsidiary of Royal Dutch/Shell.

The Trans World Airlines boycott—called by the Independent Federation of Flight Attendants—is to protest TWA's labor policies.

Top Honors

The 1988 NEA Student Teachers of the Year—Kelly Smith of Sacramento, Calif., and Timothy Bodnarik of Wellington, Ohio—were recognized at the NEA Representative Assembly in New Orleans in July. Smith was named the elementary student teacher of the year; Bodnarik, the secondary teacher of the year. This sixth annual student teaching competition drew 230 applicants. Smith

Carolyn Salisbury

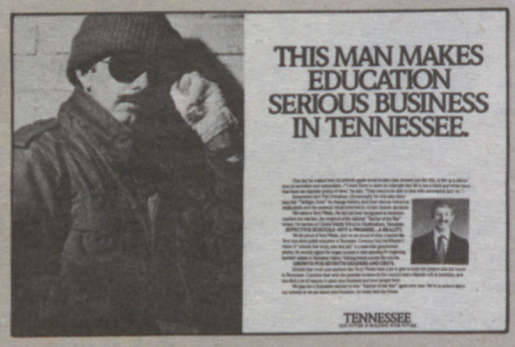
Kelly Smith

Carolyn Salisbury

Timothy Bodnarik

and Bodnarik were chosen from among 12 regional winners who demonstrated their talents in Maryland public school classrooms last spring. Each received a $2,500 award in addition to a $500 regional prize.

LOOKING BACK



► Could that sinister character in the photo above really be a teacher? You bet. He's 1988 National Teacher of the Year Terry Weeks (People, May/June), from Murfreesboro, Tenn. Weeks plays the parts of different characters to make situations past and present come alive for his seventh graders at Central Middle School. In this instance, he's firing up a classroom discussion on terrorism and nationalism.

The Tennessee economic development agency used this photo of Weeks in an ad designed to encourage businesses and people to relocate in the Volunteer State.

"Schools that work and teachers like Terry Weeks have given a lot to Tennessee," says the text of the ad, which appeared in *USA Today*.

► Twenty outstanding high school students make up the 1988 all-USA academic first team (May/June). NEA, *USA Today*, and the National Association of Secondary School Principals sponsored competition for the team. Some 1,000 students—each nominated by a principal and teacher—took part.

Judges for the final round were prominent educators, including NEA Vice-President Keith Geiger and former NEA Executive Committee member Pearl Mack.

Members of the first team are: Pamela Abshire, Salem (Va.) High School; Deborah Cheng, Rolla (Mo.) High School; Charles Doran, Walt Whitman High School, Bethesda, Md.; Nathan Gilliland, Northwest High School, Omaha, Nebr.; Tracy Goldsmith, Falmouth (Mass.) High School; Jonathan Gross, Miami (Fla.) Killian High School; Katrin Jellema, Grand Haven (Mich.) High School; David Kaufman, Altoona (Pa.) Area High School; Alice Kim, Pittsford-Mendon (N.Y.) High School; John Miller, Salesianum School, Wilmington, Del.; Beth Noveck, Lakewood Prep, Howell, N.J.; Jennifer Patience, Thousand Oaks (Calif.) High School; Erik Phelps, Durand (Ill.) High School; Marybeth Rizzo, Upper Arlington High School, Columbus, Ohio; Derek Walker, Benjamin Mays Academy of Science, Atlanta, Ga.; Rebecca Walkowitz, Stuyvesant High School, New York, N.Y.; Jason Wang, University High School, Irvine, Calif.; Seth Watkins, Blind Brook High School, Rye Brook, N.Y.; Ruth Wolbert, Central Community High School, Flint, Mich.; Wayne Yu, Stillwater (Okla.) High School.

Joe Di Dio

PERSONALLY SPEAKING

PLAN AHEAD

Too many times, people think of providing for their family's needs strictly in terms of money. Nowhere is this seen more clearly than when people plan for their eventual death. Quite often, when people die, all they leave behind is a lot of insurance money—and tangled finances.

The most important thing you can do for the loved ones who survive you is to ensure that they won't have needless headaches compounding their grief. By planning ahead, keeping your personal affairs in order, and sharing essential information with your family, you can do much to make your passing less painful.

Here are the four major documents you need to consider.

Will

What it is: A will is a legal document that mandates certain actions after your death. In it, you can designate a guardian for your minor children, bequeath your property, appoint an executor, and make arrangements for family members who may not be able to handle their own finances. Wills are recognized in every state, but the requirements often vary from one to another.

Why you need it: The most important reason to have a will is to make sure your wishes are known and carried out after you die. If you die without one ("intestate"), the state will take over and divide your property according to its own rules. This can be a problem if your family does not fit the standard mold; if, for instance, you're a couple with children from a previous marriage.

A will can also save your survivors time, money, and grief. A court-appointed executor will charge a fee, and your estate may be tied up in probate for years as your relatives argue about what you wanted done with your property. Many families have been permanently split over who should inherit what.

What it will cost: At the low end, there are books that show how to write a simple will. An extremely complicated will, on the other hand, may cost thousands of dollars. Costs also depend on the part of the country and the experience of the lawyer. The average person should expect to pay between fifty and several hundred dollars.

Because the laws governing wills are so complex, it's wise to spend the money for a lawyer's or paralegal's advice. Shop for the best price, and don't forget to find out whether your state education Association offers an Attorney Referral program.

Living Will

What it is: A living will is a document that mandates an action while you are still alive but unable to manage your affairs because of your health. It assures your wishes are carried out with respect to "extraordinary" medical care. Usually, you must be over 18 years old and of sound mind to write one. Living wills are often void while you are pregnant.

Why you need it: Technology today enables doctors to prolong life beyond the point some people would consider reasonable. A living will helps your family make the very difficult decision of whether to cease heroic measures to keep you alive. A living will also may protect them and the hospital from legal challenges after they make that decision.

The drawback of living wills is their relative newness. The courts have not yet fully agreed on what form they should take or what their language should be. For instance, how does one define "extraordinary care" or "incompetent"? And what is a "reasonable chance of survival"—50 percent? 10 percent? 1 percent? A living will should therefore be just part of the communication process by which you tell your family and doctor what kind of care you expect.

What it will cost: Most people write their own living will, but 38 states and the District of Columbia currently have legislation covering what such wills contain. (For instance, in some states a living will must be witnessed by one or two persons who are neither heirs nor your attending physician in order to be valid.) If your state has such requirements, you might want a lawyer to review what you have written. The cost should be less than $100.

Letter of Instructions

What it is: A letter of instructions is a non-legal document containing information your survivors will need to know immediately upon your death. In most states, your instructions are not considered binding, so it does not take the place of a will.

Items you might want to record in a letter of instructions include your funeral arrangement wishes, the location of your important papers, names and phone numbers of friends and advisers, insurance information, bank and credit card account numbers, whether you want to be an organ donor, and special instructions you wish to keep private. Since a letter of instruction carries little or no legal weight, don't ask anyone to do anything controversial.

Why you need it: Wills are usually not read until well after the funeral—too late for your wishes to be taken into consideration. Wills are also difficult and expensive to update, so you don't want to have to change yours every time you make a new investment or change accounts.

What it will cost: There are usually no costs involved in writing a letter of instructions. Financial planning workbooks can be helpful, and your lawyer can review what you've written to ensure it doesn't contradict your will.

An Estate Plan

What it is: Estate planning is the development of a strategy to reduce or avoid estate taxes, lessen the expenses and delays of probate, and provide for heirs who may not be able to handle their finances.

Estate planning utilizes many tools—such as trusts, insurance policies, gifts, and transfers. The most important tool, however, is a good will.

Why you need it: Estate taxes are mostly of concern to people with more than $600,000 in assets. It's no longer unusual for people of modest means to accumulate that much during their life. And even if your estate goes untaxed, the inheritance may increase your spouse's net worth to the taxable point.

Some people use trusts to pass their assets to a spouse or children without going through probate.

Estate planning may also be called for if you have an heir who is a minor, incapacitated, or a spendthrift.

What it will cost: For most people, there's no need for a complicated estate plan. Your lawyer, banker, accountant, or financial planner should be able to advise you as part of regular duties, or for a small extra fee. You can also find do-it-yourself books that will explain the basic strategies of investment planning.

If your estate is large, or if you have unusual needs, you will need more specialized help. Such help can be expensive, but can result in huge tax savings. Expect to pay $1,000 or more for a detailed plan and the legal work to set up the necessary trusts. Since the cost is so high, and the consequences of a bad plan so great, choose your planner very carefully. Interview at least three, and ask to see plans they've done for other persons with finances similar to your own.

Letters

Defining Good Teaching

The cover story "What Is *Good* Teaching?" (May/June) was both timely and informative.

Lee Shulman's efforts are concrete attempts to deal effectively with the reform movement that is slowly spreading throughout the teaching profession.

As a graduate student at Stanford University this past year, I heard Lee Shulman address teacher certification issues in several of my classes. Not only is Dr. Shulman an informative and entertaining speaker, but he takes the time to listen and synthesize feedback from educators.

I was very impressed with his approach to teacher concerns. He noted the importance of local teacher involvement to ensure successful implementation of new policies.

NEA and its state affiliates need to involve teachers in the reform movement at all levels; without grass roots support and activity, the fine efforts of people like Lee Shulman will never be realized.

Toni Sulkowski
McMurray, Pennsylvania

I am reminded of the lesson taught in the story "The Emperor's New Clothes." Teachers' competence is highly important, but how and when do you measure competency?

As with the emperor's clothes, everyone is looking for an instrument to test the competence of a teacher. Why put $2.1 million into research on individuals who are already teachers? I feel the money would be more wisely spent if used in the college training of teachers.

If a college has reliable credibility in producing competent teachers, the problem would be solved. If you didn't pass your teacher training classes and show your competency, then you wouldn't be a teacher.

Don't be swayed by popular outcries. Speak up and stop the competence problem at the root—in the training process.

Mary K. Miller
Greenville, Pennsylvania

This month's cartoon comes from Cathy Rosenow, gifted and talented program coordinator for the Union Township (Ind.) school system.

Cultural Sensitivities

I read with interest and complete agreement "To Teach Them All Is To Know Them All" (May/June).

As a teacher in a high school with an ESOL program and located in the heart of a Baltimore suburb that boasts a variety of cultural backgrounds, I feel strongly the need to help each of us to get to know and appreciate the diverse heritages of our community. I was particularly pleased with the fine suggestions for activities that could help students develop a better understanding of the rich traditions of our patchwork quilt society.

May I commend to your readers a series of books for older elementary students that could be useful in a unit on ethnic heritages? The "My Best Friend" series, published by Simon & Schuster's juvenile division, tells the stories of nine- and ten-year-old youngsters and their best friends who are from a variety of cultures. As the author of two of these books, I was privileged to carry out research among Greek/American and Portuguese/American communities of Maryland and Massachusetts.

For more information about this series, you may write to the editor, Jane Steltenpohl, Simon & Schuster Secondary Education Group, Prentice Hall Building, Englewood Cliffs, NJ 07632, 1-201-592-2000.

Phyllis Yingling
Baltimore, Maryland

Joe Clark Revisited

Regarding the article on Paterson, N.J., principal Joe Clark (Local Look, May/June), I say give Joe Clark a break! The man stood up in our world of gross permissiveness and said, "Wait just a minute. What are we allowing in our schools? It's time to set down some rules here. Life is full of rules, and it's time to start teaching them!"

Even Dr. Spock backed away from so much permissiveness. We all know down deep that our self-discipline was at least somewhat hard to learn, and further to continue to practice. Yet we have found it to be rewarding too.

Duane Esarey
Lyons, Colorado

Joe Clark should be ashamed of himself. Baseball bats and bullhorns are reminiscent of a Bull Connor mentality that respects neither education nor people.

Michael P. Chew
APO New York

Questioning the Figures

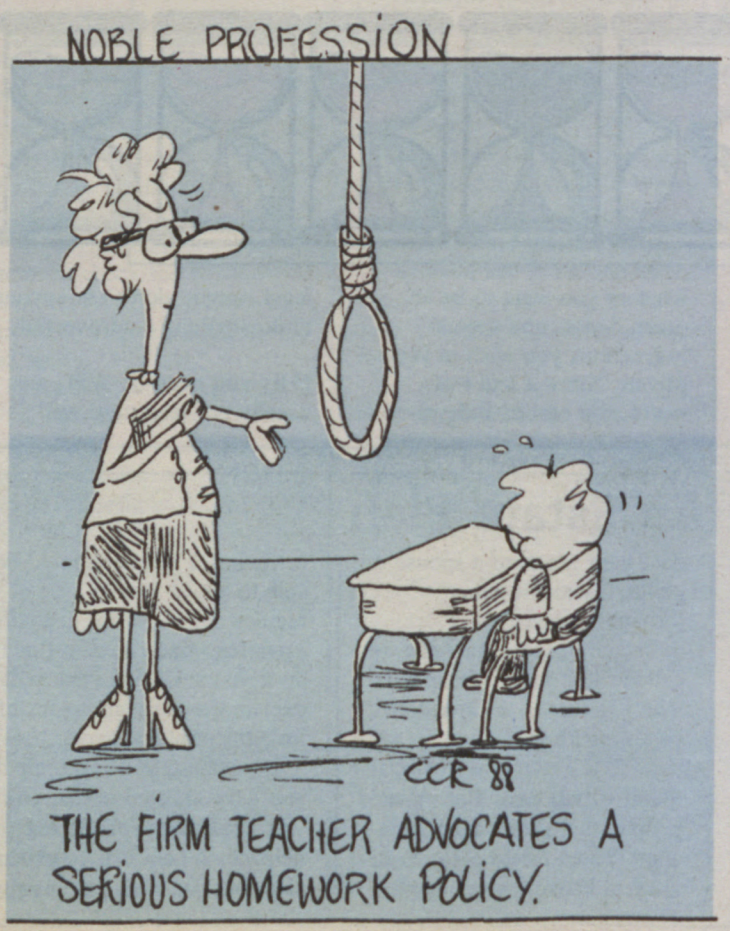
I am writing in regard to the teacher salary chart (StateSide, May/June). I have averaged the figures on the chart several times and do not find an average of $28,031.

Possibly I am in error in my calculation. I added all the salaries on the chart and divided by 51. The average was $26,872.

I realize the figures are estimates, but it seems to me an estimate should be closer than the $1,139 gap between your figure and mine.

Harley Brucker
Council Bluffs, Iowa

Ed. Note: The national average teacher salary is a weighted *average. A weighted average salary is computed by multiplying the average teacher salary of each state by the number of teachers in that state. Adding the resulting figures for each state and dividing the sum by the number of teachers in the country produces the national average teacher salary.*



Educational Excellence

The article "The Forgotten Message: Excellence Costs" (April), focused on professionalizing teaching with respect to salaries. Plans to professionalize teaching have been made in such publications as The Carnegie Forum's *A Nation Prepared* and the Holmes Group's *Tomorrow's Teachers.*

While these two reports certainly do not totally concur, they both leave a similar impression. The impression is that we must upgrade teachers by having them meet standards of academic excellence, display professional "showmanship," and exhibit qualities found in managerial and supervising positions. The reports seem to diminish being "just a classroom teacher."

Academic success and acquisition of knowledge are important, but a "master" teacher, in my mind, can be a very effective classroom teacher and a true professional without necessarily being a good manager and supervisor of other teachers. An effective teacher is one who cares and nurtures; teaching is a rather emotionally-centered profession! These reports do not acknowledge this side of the profession. Perhaps you cannot measure this, but you can value it!

Jane Haley
Charlestown, New Hampshire

Black Education

In response to the article "Black Education: How Far Have We Come?" (April), I—as a student studying special education at the University of Wisconsin—feel from the information presented in the article that we have not come far.

I agree that the low quality of education Blacks receive is appalling, but I do not feel that desegregation alone is the answer. From the argument presented, it appears to cause more problems than it solves.

By desegregating students, educators are placing students of lower socioeconomic status among students of higher and forcing them to compete with each other. It is incredibly unfair to place any student in that type of situation.

When they fail, as many of them are sure to do, they are labeled educable mentally retarded instead of learning disabled and placed in classrooms accordingly. I would wager that few of the Black students placed in emotionally or mentally retarded classrooms are really retarded or even learning disabled. I believe they are of normal intelligence but have not had the opportunity to exhibit this due to lack of proper intervention.

Anne K. Lambert
Madison, Wisconsin

Sexual Harassment

I was pleased to read that NEA and its state and local affiliates are taking the initiative for educating members about sexual harassment ("Confronting Sexual Harassment," April). Not only may they be held legally liable for sexual harassment committed by one of their employees, but the members may also be sexually harassed themselves.

I'm pleased to see that educators are being trained. I hope it doesn't stop there, however. These educators are responsible for teaching students about Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. If students can become aware of this problem early, then it may prevent sexual harassment from happening as often.

Donna Larson
St. Cloud, Minnesota

NEA Postage Bills

NEA Today stresses that it is sent to *all* NEA members—wow, what a postage bill! I receive my *NEA Today* via *first-class* mail, which costs 85¢! How many more members receive the paper first class?

I suggest you mail the paper by some much *cheaper* method. If the postage were 20¢ instead of the 85¢, you would save $650 for every one thousand mailings—and how many thousands do you mail out?

Robert Schawalder
APO San Francisco

Ed. Note: NEA started mailing NEA Today *first class to APO addresses after it received many complaints from overseas members that delivery took several weeks. Most Association members receive their publications via third-class mail—costing about 7¢ for each piece—the most inexpensive postage rate.*

School Dropouts

The appalling dropout statistics seem to have stimulated much concern and endless speculation over the causes and cure of this serious problem. And rightly so!

Most efforts to solve the problem seem to completely ignore one of the most glaring and obvious reasons: boredom! Seldom do educationalists blame this potent, causative, and distressing condition for the rise in dropouts.

Schools where "exit interviews" are routinely conducted soon identify at least some of the weak spots in their programs. Boredom in the classroom ranks high among the reasons for leaving school.

Our educational system may be loaded with superb teachers, but let's not deny the presence of many who have practiced dull, monotonous classroom methods to a point of perfection. They, too, must accept some responsibility for the bored student.

Ramond H. LaFrey
Jensen Beach, Florida

What's *your* opinion? NEA members are cordially invited to use this page to exchange ideas with their colleagues around the nation. We reserve the right to edit letters for length and clarity. Address correspondence to "Letters," NEA Today, 1201 16th St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036.

Debate

Should Schools Open Before Labor Day?

Chris Holmes

Gary Blumenstein teaches U.S. history at Kemps Landing Intermediate School in Virginia Beach, Va., where he was voted the school's 1988 Teacher of the Year. Blumenstein is a director of the Virginia Education Association, a member of the NEA Resolutions Committee, and past-president of the Virginia Beach Education Association.

YES

Picture a classroom in an un-air-conditioned school. It's early June, and the temperature is hovering around 100°. Closed venetian blinds cover open windows, keeping out the beating rays of the sun.

Students sag. They think more about folding notebook paper into fans than about the lesson on the Tet Offensive. Tempers are short. Even answering roll call is a monumental effort.

This year, teachers in many Virginia classrooms will face scenes like this. New state legislation mandates that schools open *after* Labor Day, requiring districts to extend their calendars well into early summer. A community matter has become a state matter.

School calendars should be developed locally by a committee of those most directly affected: teachers, administrators, students, and parents. In setting an opening date, the committee should consider many factors.

Weather patterns are important. The number of days a school shuts down because of inclement weather affects how far into the summer the year will extend. And bad weather isn't limited to northern states. Hurricanes and flooding are just as disruptive to the calendar as heavy snowfall.

Air conditioning is another consideration. Without it, three to four weeks of high temperatures in the fall and spring will greatly reduce the quality of instruction. A mandated late opening denies a district the option of distributing those weeks between the start of the school year and the end. In my experience, students handle high temperatures better at the beginning of the year than when they're waiting for the start of summer vacation.

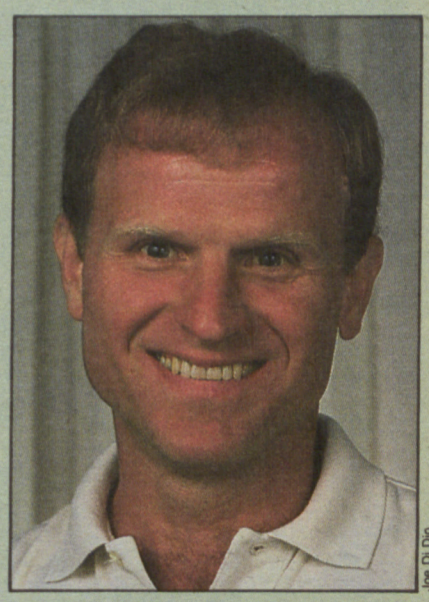
Learning won't be the only victim. What about community groups that have traditionally used school buildings for their summer programs? Will they be cut off from this service if the school year extends into summer? What of local businesses that depend on teen help every summer?

What about teens themselves? If they want summer jobs, they'll be faced with a no-win situation. They can accept work before the end of school and add the stress of a new situation to the stress of preparing for final exams—or else forego the choice positions.

Other students will lose the chance to take summer courses whose opening days overlap the school calendar. So will teachers who require recertification credits.

A longer school year has been a common recommendation of the current education reform movement. Requiring schools to open only after Labor Day sets the stage for greater conflict in the future, should a local district or state choose to exercise this option.

Opening schools before Labor Day is a satisfactory way to meet the many needs a school calendar must accommodate. Local communities should be entitled to avail themselves of this option without hindrance from state mandates.


Joe Di Dio

Michael Naples teaches English and coaches girls' cross country and track-and-field at Ocean City (N.J.) High School. Naples serves on the New Jersey Education Association executive committee and is a past president of the Ocean City Education Association. He's been a delegate to the NEA Representative Assembly for the past 14 years.

NO

I've been around long enough to be cynical about new approaches to improve education, including an early start to the school year. When the school year starts and finishes, and how long it runs, are not factors that affect the overall quality of education. Quality—despite reformers' preachments to the contrary—is not necessarily affected by quantity.

If the idea of starting school before Labor Day is not to lengthen the school year but just to finish it earlier, I fail to see the point. Certainly, mid- to late August weather can be just as uncomfortable as mid- to late June.

Perhaps advocates of an early opening have air-conditioned offices. But just suggest an earlier starting date to teachers on the third floor of any un-air-conditioned school. Ask school bus drivers how many buses are cooled. Listen to any coach who's tried to train athletes in late August.

I envision many other complications. A sudden change in historical pattern would clash with accepted American summertime habits. What happens to family travel, camp, outdoor play, and other activities vital to youngsters' physical and emotional development?

Teaching in a seasonal resort area, I know firsthand just how disastrous a pre-Labor Day start would be. During the summer, teachers work to supplement their incomes and students work to save money for college or to help support their families. Both contribute to the local economy, a major source of the tax revenue for our schools.

Already many college students leave their jobs before Labor Day, causing a workforce shortage. The problem will be compounded if high school students and educators with seasonal jobs are called back to school earlier as well.

Some merchants would undoubtedly induce high school students to go on working even after school opens by offering them overtime and bonuses—in the Ocean City area, a practice already common *after* Labor Day. Students eager for the extra money might succumb, rationalizing that not much goes on at the beginning of the year anyway. We educators would become frustrated. Some students would be absent. Others would attend both work and school—and end up too tired to do their assignments.

School activities and athletics would suffer from limited participation. A working student can't attend early season practice sessions and might just skip all extracurricular activities.

Educators in some parts of our country may not relate to the problems of a summer resort, but summer jobs are a long-standing tradition everywhere. If there's a choice, it's better for students to work full-time in summer than part-time during the school year. Furthermore, the economic reality is that the school can't count on the commercial community to fit its demands to the academic calendar.

Let's allow students to finish their summer activities—work or study—before engaging them in a new year.

Eight States Mandate After-Labor Day Opening

In most states, the opening date of the school year is left to the discretion of individual school districts. But eight states and the District of Columbia have laws mandating that classes not start until after Labor Day. Those eight are Arkansas, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, South Dakota, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia. In Arkansas, Iowa, and Missouri, the law allows districts located in agricultural areas to open in August.

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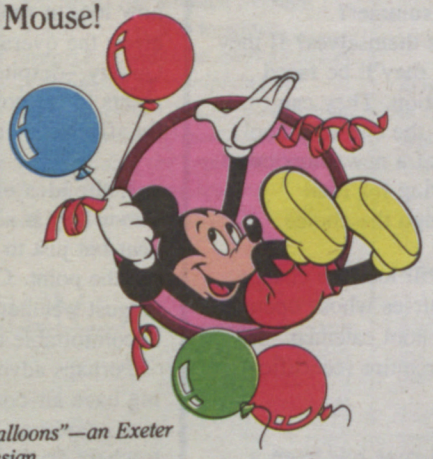

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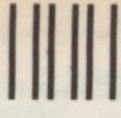

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